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JAMES A. RALPH

GOD'S EYE VIEW

RETURN OF THE NATIVE FRANK GETLEIN

VIOLENCE IN BRITAIN'S STREETS BRIAN WICKER

END OF THE CONCORDAT? MARGO HAMMOND

A NEW SECRETARIAT ABIGAIL McCARTHY

ORDINATION OF WOMEN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (contd.)

A TALE OF MIDNIGHT THOMAS POWERS

TRAVELING MAN COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

ALSO: DAVID O'BRIEN, MICHAEL ZEIK, WAYNE ANDREWS, P. DAVID FINKS, GERALD J. McCARRON, RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, PHILLIP CORWIN

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NEWS & VIEWS

A Dissent

Criticism in *L'Osservatore Romano* of the non-accessibility of diocesan archives in the U.S. [News & Views, 8/19/77] brought a quick rejoinder from church historian John Tracy Ellis.

In a letter to the *Washington Post*, Father Ellis claimed that in his 35 years of research in the field of American Catholic history he has been denied access to a diocesan archive only twice: once in Savannah in 1948 and once in Tucson in 1955.

"To be sure," he said, "it is altogether true that some American bishops have shown a benighted attitude toward their archives, but the majority have been open toward scholars who sought access for research purposes. That includes Philadelphia, where no longer than six years ago I was given free access to documents dating from the 1950s."

Ellis added his voice to criticism alluded to in the Religious News Service item cited here: that for *Osservatore Romano* to speak disparagingly of American diocesan archival policy was a little like the stove calling kettle black.

"Far more serious than the closed-archival policy of American bishops," Ellis wrote, "has been the failure of the Holy See itself to open the Vatican Archives beyond the death of Pope Pius IX in 1878. Thus the long reign of Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) is banned, a ban that has caused ecclesiastical historians more frustration than all the American dioceses combined."

This Vatican policy is the more regrettable in Ellis's opinion when one learns, "on reliable authority," that the voluminous papers for Leo XIII's administration have been readied for scholars's use for some time, with additional accommodations provided in which the scholars could work.

He continues: "And since the archives of other branches of the Church's central government normally follow the policy of the Vatican Archives, the current policy prevents anything of a substantial character being done in the Church's history beyond the year 1878."

The decision to ban or to open usage of the Vatican Archives rests in the final analysis, Ellis reminds, with the Pope himself.

Nice Idea

The Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland has officially dropped the term "convert" for members of other churches who are received into full communion.

The notice is contained in a new English-language manual for the "reception" of baptized Christians into the Catholic Church there.

In a foreword, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Gray of Liverpool states that it has become evident in recent years that the term "convert" is not appropriate to baptized Christians, but should be restricted to people who change from unbelief to Christian belief.

This is a distinction not made by the American Catholic Church, which according to the 1977 *Official Catholic Directory*, continues to classify all new Catholics, exclusive of born-Catholics, under the heading "Converts."

Bishop Gray is chairman of Britain's National Liturgical Commission.

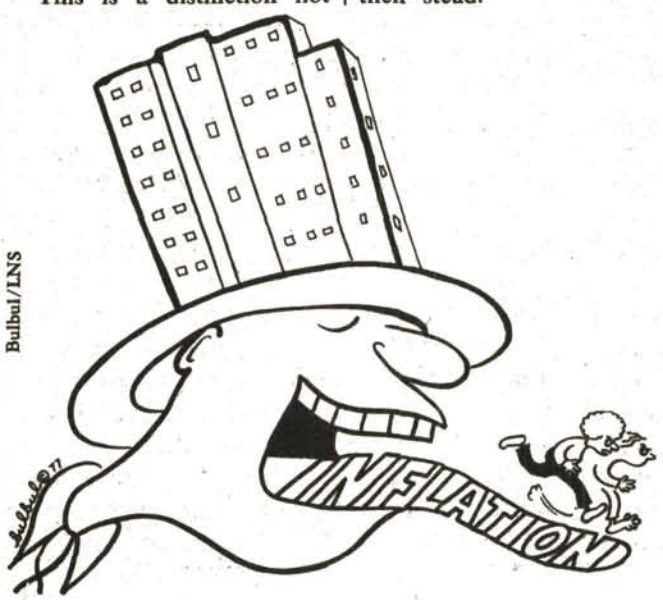
Happy Trend

Add another American church to those moving to get rid of the "Reproaches," the ancient litany of chastisement in the Good Friday liturgy directed at Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus and now widely regarded as anti-Semitic and unecumenical.

The Church Council of the American Lutheran Church has deemed insufficient a less offensive version of the "Reproaches" proposed for the new Lutheran Book of Worship, and has asked that the "Reproaches" be deleted completely.

The request goes to the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship for action.

The Episcopal Church voted at its 1976 convention in Minneapolis to delete the "Reproaches" from its new Book of Common Prayer, and a committee of the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference recommended last spring that parishes substitute a hymn in their stead.



Bulbul/LNS

Two-Way Street

It isn't just the flow of America dollars to the IRA that is a source of concern.

"It would help," *New Times* quotes an American intelligence source, "if right-wing fundamentalist groups in the U.S. would stop helping Paisley"—the Rev. Ian Paisley, political agitator, British Parliament member and self-proclaimed head of his own Protestant sect in Northern Ireland, who says he doesn't hate Catholics, "just Catholicism."

New Times's Robert Shrum maintains that Paisley's "best friend" in the U.S. is Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. According to Shrum, Thurmond "has privately raised money for Paisley, who in turn has passed it on to Protestant terrorists." Shrum's source: "State Department reports."

Odds and Ends

—George P. Winship Jr. offered this pleasant couplet "On the Ordination of Women" in the *Christian Century:* "God chose the humblest role that Godhead can:/For our redemption She became a man."

—From the comfy, arelligious, ivied precincts of Dartmouth College, syndicated columnist Jeffrey Hart sits in judgment on Catholic colleges such as Holy Cross, Boston College, Fordham, Notre Dame that once produced "most of Hoover's FBI agents," a dubious distinction, by the way. Writes Hart: "Today, however, these Catholic campuses crawl with New Leftists, swinging theologians, and half-demented nuns. These Catholic campuses are not now producing FBI agents. With any luck, rising socially, they will produce as many Communist spies as Harvard once did." This from a man who in the same column dares call Dan Berrigan "zany." JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Battle Stars

Madison, Ct.

To the Editors: In re "Washington Report: Prof. Kissinger" by Frank Getlein, 24 June 1977. The article on "Der Freuer Heinrich" was a rather keen hatchet job on one of our great nonheroes; however I respectfully take exception to the derogatory comment about a gallant soldier!

Gen. Al Haig not only commanded a rifle company in the Korean War, and won a couple of Silver Stars, but he also commanded a rifle battalion, and later a brigade of the 1st U.S. Inf. Div. (the Army's elite shock division in three wars), in Vietnam, and won the Distinguished Service Cross, for conspicuous bravery under fire.

Perhaps Mr. Getlein is unaware that Gen. Eisenhower rose from command of a peace time battalion (Ike was never under fire), to be the Supreme Commander, with five star rank in Europe in WW II, "with no military experience at all between those two ranks"!

(COL.) THOMAS F. LANCER (USA-RET.)

Grass Cuttings

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: In "Floundering With Grass" [July 8] Marilyn Moorcroft makes mention of Günter Grass's play *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* and Grass's specific advice as to the direction of the play; "Do not make the face of 'The Boss' look like Brecht." Ms. Moorcroft can only surmise as to why this advice was given since The Boss is obviously modeled after Brecht and in its final analysis ". . . is a painful indictment [of Brecht] by Grass." This is not an unusual interpretation of the play. One New York critic recently capsulized the play as "Günter Grass's indictment of Brecht . . .," while another calls the play "Günter Grass's attack on Bertolt Brecht . . ." Is it any wonder Grass does not want The Boss to look

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THE CANAL

Someone once wrote that the American people would do anything for Latin America except read about it. That pretty much matches our experience here; when you talk about Latin America, you are talking into a dead mike. That is why it is strange that so much excitement is being generated by the Panama Canal issue. During his almost successful try for the Republican nomination, Ronald Reagan ran the issue up the flagpole and saluted it almost nightly, and he got great mileage out of it. Now Senator Strom Thurmond and his conservative colleagues are warming up for a repeat performance, with an expensive mass media campaign in the works, and old master Reagan is back on stage making threatening noises. One way or the other, the Canal issue promises to liven things up in the months ahead.

On second thought, though, maybe it is not surprising that the Canal can raise high blood pressure from Maine to California. For the uninformed and the nationalistic, this is one of those 4th of July, American-as-apple-pie issues which bring out the worst in us. The Canal issue brings back pictures of Teddy Roosevelt and the big stick and evokes memories of happier days when the U.S. did very much what it wanted in Latin America. With defeat in Vietnam rankling and the threat of Taiwan disengagement on the horizon, it is really no wonder that the Canal has become a great conservative cause. Indeed, President Carter will be lucky if he wins this one.

This is not to say that Mr. Carter's case on the Canal is weak—far from it. Two treaties are proposed, one guaranteeing the permanent neutrality of the Canal and the other involving details about its operation until the year 2000. Transfer of the Canal to Panamanian control does

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not take place until the end of this century. The United States will have a permanent right to defend the neutrality of the Canal from any threat. U.S. warships will have a permanent right to transit the Canal expeditiously and without conditions—although in fact the military significance of the Canal has become largely nil. In reality, the proposed treaties enhance U.S. security interests, and at relatively small cost, because the operation of the Canal at this point is more threatened by possible Panamanian disorders or even guerrilla warfare than by external threats, which in any case the U.S. is allowed to counter by the terms of these treaties. Further, all U.S. civilians in government jobs in the Canal are guaranteed their jobs until retirement. In short, the proposed pacts are strongly advantageous to the United States —so much so, in fact, that leftists and nationalist groups in Panama are planning to campaign against them on the ground that too many concessions have been made to Washington. These groups are particularly disturbed by the fact that U.S. troops can remain in Panama for the balance of the century and that the U.S. has the right to intervene even after that date in order to defend the Canal's neutrality.

Above all, however, the case for the new Canal arrangement rests on the immorality of trying to cling to the colonial status quo. Here we agree with the American Catholic bishops who in 1976 collectively said that "a moral imperative exists to fashion a new treaty which respects the territorial integrity, sovereignty and economy of Panama, and dissolves the vestiges of a relationship which more closely resembles the colonial politics of the nineteenth century than the realities of an interdependent world of sovereign and equal states." In contrast to this view, one conservative U.S. senator was quoted as saying about the Panama Canal, "We stole it fair and square." That about sums up the U.S. historic role in this matter, whatever our contributions since that time, and it also sums up the general outlook of too many of the objectors to the new treaty.

Nonetheless, President Carter is not without supporters on this issue. Serious foreign policy commentators have for years pointed out the deep resentment throughout Latin America at our exploitive role in Panama, and they have spelled out in detail the likelihood and consequences of serious disorders in Panama if the new treaties are not confirmed by the Senate. In this matter, former President Ford and Henry Kissinger are backing Mr. Carter in the national interest, and their words should carry some weight with moderates. As for Catholics who may be in doubt on the issue, we hope they will accept the reasoning of the American bishops when they state that the basic question involved in a new treaty is the acknowledgment in principle and in fact of Panamanian sovereignty over its own territory. "The terms of the 1903 Treaty acknowledge the principle of Panamanian sovereignty, but prevent its exercise in any form in the Canal Zone. Without rehearsing the history or terms of the treaty, we simply would affirm that the moral, legal and political realities of international life today render the 1903 Treaty an anachronism." An anachronism indeed, and the sooner we are rid of it, the better.

COMING: Gary MacEoin discusses U.S. options in Latin America.

WASHINGTON REPORT

RETURN OF THE NATIVE

It wasn't really a shock that the man described as a "former" SS lieutenant colonel, Herbert Kappler, had escaped from the Rome military hospital where he was serving a life sentence given him in a post-World War II trial for murdering 335 Italian civilians in 1944. In the first place, Kappler was a good soldier, as Germans understand that term: escaping when captured by the enemy is part of a good soldier's duty. In Kappler's case the enemy was that ancient foe of his country, justice.

Moreover, Kappler, as an SS officer, was also a good Nazi and he employed the archetypical Nazi combination of whining for pity and using the pity granted to outwit, discomfort and defeat the persons granting the pity. That strategy was the master plan of the master race from the eruption of Hitler as a beer hall orator to the final catastrophe his worshipful countrymen brought upon themselves. In Kappler's case, he had been safely contained for 30 years in a military prison on Gaeta, an island halfway between Naples and Rome, a formidable place to escape from. By whining about his health, Kappler got himself transferred to the Celio hospital in Rome and used his whined-for act of mercy as the lever against those who had shown him mercy. His wife, in another act of compassion by the authorities, was allowed to visit him in Rome, left the hospital lugging a large suitcase, inside of which the mass murderer lay curled up like the corpse of one of his victims.

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All of that was no surprise, was right on form. As soon as the Nazi began complaining about his health, extra guards should have been assigned. What did come as a surprise, indeed a shock, was the reaction of the West German government to all this. That reaction was, no reaction. The killer was somehow carried into West Germany as soon as he was out of the clink. The authorities not only knew his whereabouts but moved into position as unofficial spokesmen. They would not reveal where the desperado was in hiding, the government announced, because some crazy fools might try to recapture him and return him to Italy and justice, the enemy. A clause in the West German constitution expressly forbids the extradition of West German citizens to foreign countries and Kappler is regarded as a citizen of the Federal Republic although his last oath of loyalty was to the Third Reich and its leader—and although, captured in Northern Italy as a fugitive from justice, he had never set foot in the republic until he was illegally brought out of Italy the other day.

He was so completely made a citizen of the supposedly new and reformed German republic that, in connection with his escape, we learned a couple of other things: the West Germany government had paid Kappler the pay and allowances due him as an officer of the German army, for instance, and, utterly inexplicable, has on numerous occasions in the past 30 years made representations to the Italian government for the release of Kappler on—of all things—"humanitarian" grounds.

Finally, as the killer and his moll went into government-protected hiding, Frau Kappler's doorstep was heaped with messages of congratulations, wishes for continuing good luck and bouquets of flowers, all spontaneous expressions from today's reformed, democratic West Germans welcoming back to their midst one who'd been away too long.

It does make you wonder. For one thing, it makes you wonder exactly how deeply the West German government was involved in the escape plot. Money? Money and brains? Money, brains and personnel? From the instantaneous way that government knew of its returned prodigal and the smoothly carried out little program of statements, the whole thing couldn't have come as the shock to the German government that it did to the Italian and to newspaper readers everywhere. Is there a government program to rescue convicted Nazi criminals from the consequences of their crimes on foreign territory against foreign nationals? Are all the criminals getting paid their wages as contracted for by the Third Reich? Was the anti-extradition clause put into the constitution out of consideration for Nazi criminals then at large? At their behest? On their orders? Who's in charge over there?

Another thing it makes you wonder about is what we are doing maintaining all those troops in West Germany to help support the people who support the Nazis. We and the Russians fought the Nazis, ultimately effectively. The West Germans did not. They were the Nazis. Now they have become, we are assured, powerful believers in, mighty defenders of, democracy, human rights, all those good things. Have they really? How about the human rights, how about humanitarian considerations for the 335 Italian civilians slaughtered by Kappler? Germans, to be sure, have always considered Italians not quite human: they're always singing and dancing, painting pictures, eating well, having a good time instead of killing people. After all.

That wonder in turn produces one wonder more, this one about the whole Middle European basis of the Cold War. Our bedrock theory has been that the Russians are out to conquer the world by force of arms. The list of nations seized by Russian arms or the threat of Russian arms begins with a piece of Finland, continues down the Baltic coast, includes Poland, Czechoslovakia, "their" Germany, the Balkans with the notable exceptions of Communist Yugoslavia, Communist Albania. A substantial take. When the take was taken, however, all of those countries except Czechoslovakia were willing or unwilling parts of the Nazi war machine doing its damnedest to destroy the Soviet Union. Is it conceivable that the Russian takeover of the German conquest of Eastern Europe and the Balkans was not necessarily the first phase of a military conquest of the world—a program badly bogged down for the last quarter century if it existed—but the most obvious way of getting lots of controllable space between Russia and the continuing threat of German invasion? The Soviet Union was made possible by a German invasion of Russia. In World War II, the Germans tried again, would doubtless have succeeded without the American arsenal against them, made no secret of their plans for European Russia as a group of tributary states. Since such German invasions seem to happen with some regularity, would the Russians be entirely fanciful to assume another one somewhere down the line? Has our reconstitution of West Germany as a military power in fact confirmed the Soviets in their fear of the Germans, hardened their determination to hang on to whatever buffer states they can, hence led to all those armed invasions of their own allies? The possibility is at least worth thinking about. The softness, not to say the tender loving care, of the West German government toward Kappler suggests, symbolically and perhaps substantially, that if Russians do nurture such fears, they are not entirely irrational in doing so.

And that brings up a final wonder, wonder at our own naiveté in setting up the Nuremberg trials of the captured criminals, encouraging trials elsewhere of others, such as Kappler in Italy. There is something to be said, after all, for the concept of outlawry. There is human conduct so depraved, of such enormity, on such a scale and so universally known, that trials become

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meaningless, frivolous really. The conduct of the German nation from 1933 to 1945 was precisely such conduct. The leaders of the German government in that period and such lesser criminals as Col. Kappler, had placed themselves outside the law. Captured, their fate should have been simply to be shot on sight, granted dental, fingerprint identification, whatever. That course would have spared us Speer as best-selling author: "How I Made Millions in the Nazi Slave Trade, Repented and Made Millions More as a Contrite Sinner." It would have spared us Kappler as a German hero.

When the Germans try it again—and the Kappler case is disquieting as evidence of the long-range intention there—we should remember all this, plan accordingly and have some hope that that time the end will be the end.

FRANK GETLEIN

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FROM BRITAIN

VIOLENCE IN THE STREETS

I am writing this article on the morning after the result of the Ladywood by-election, here in my adopted city of Birmingham. The most notorious fact about this election has been the riot caused during the campaign by the presence of opposed factions, most notably the National Front (which campaigned on a racist and anti-immigrant ticket) and the Socialist Workers' Party. The Ladywood riot was undoubtedly given extra prominence and importance by the fact that two days earlier, there had been a street demonstration by the National Front in Lewisham (a district of South-East London heavily populated by black immigrants) which resulted in a good deal of violence and many casualties, including police casualties.

It is probable that history will record these pieces of violence (as indeed the media have already) in much greater detail than it will remember the more prosaic fact that the by-election result itself tends to suggest the underlying stability of British politics. For of the ten candidates, all but two lost their deposits, and the Labor candidate won by a very comfortable margin (as expected). Not only was the two-party system practically endorsed by an electorate which is more than forty percent immigrant, but the swing against the government was far lower than in other recent by-elections. No doubt a feeling that the worst is over with the prices explosion lay behind this apparently orthodox result: but it is also possible that the result reflects a general disgust with the antics of political hooligans, especially when they leave a trail of debris in the streets.

The election result, then, would tend to suggest that not too much attention should be paid to the activity of the National Front, even though it came third (above the Liberal party, which once held the seat). To spend too much time talking about the Front's odious bigotry is bound to give it more publicity: and publicity is what above all the Front seeks at the present time. Certainly to indulge in provocatively violent opposition to the Front in the streets, with the TV cameras all set-up in expectation of a brawl, is simply to play into the hands of the Front itself. Socialism certainly needs to be protected from the thuggish simplifications of the Socialist Workers' Party.

Much ink has already been spilled, and many words spoken about the Lewisham and Ladywood incidents. But the upshot seems to me clear in one respect at least: there is no easy solution to the problems raised. First of all, it is necessary to distinguish sharply between the two cases themselves. In Ladywood, the violence occurred outside a National Front meeting held in a school hall during an election campaign. The National Front is not a banned organization: its candidate had every legal right to stand. This being so, it is impossible to deny the right of the Front and its candidate to hold an election meeting during the campaign. Although the spot chosen was a sensitive one, there was no obligation on anyone to attend it, and nobody could say he had been wantonly insulted or offended by what he saw or heard: he need not have seen or heard anything.

At Lewisham, on the other hand, a street demonstration was organized deliberately to pass through crowded shopping streets full of Asian and West Indian citizens. People going about their ordinary business could not help being assaulted verbally and subjected to cruel and provoking scorn. (It was instructive, however, to learn that one elderly female 'shopper' felled—and photographed—in the street, thus gaining much public sympathy, turns out to have been a National Front member herself.) Thus, while it is hard to see how the Ladywood meeting could have been properly stopped, the Lewisham march was quite another matter. At the very least, it should have been re-routed through relatively unimportant streets, where most people would have had the sense to ignore it, or better gone to the simultaneous service for racial harmony held nearby by all the local churches. Better still, there was plenty of justification for a total ban. The Home Secretary should have decided on such a course, and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner should have had the sense to recommend it.

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Nevertheless, the legal position, as I understand it, is complex. On the one hand, it is important that essentially political decisions should be taken by politicians, not policemen. On the other, it is important that the police should not seek to interfere with people's rights to demonstrate unless this is manifestly necessary in order to protect other, equally important rights. In the Lewisham case, it seems with hindsight obvious (as many sensible local people pleaded at the time) that the police should have swallowed their pride, and sought a ban. There is little doubt that what happened has given people a general impression that the police are more concerned to protect the right of the National Front to march than they are to protect the people caught unwittingly in the middle, or victims of Front abuse who cannot protect themselves. This is the *political* result of an attempt to be non-political. The fact that the police have also been shown to be unable to cope with a situation they partly helped to create, has only exacerbated the problem. The long-term effects on police-immigrant relations can hardly be other than bad.

Yet the law relating to all these matters is intricate and full of pitfalls. Thus the Home Secretary is the only person who can actually ban an otherwise legal march through the streets: and he can only do so on the recommendation of the local police chief. There is obvious merit in this arrangement. One doesn't want possibly biased politicians interfering with activities that the local people, including police, know they can control and which are not provocative. On the other hand, the political decision to ban a march must be taken by a democratically accountable person.

Yet this arrangement has its own dangers. The police are naturally reluctant to admit that they cannot handle something in their own field; they therefore tend to refuse to ask for a ban, especially when the march as such (as distinct from the behavior of those provoked by it) seems likely to be "peaceful." It is also possible that they tend in any case to look favorably on groups which stand for more "order" than on "anarchists." (The National Front are adept at keeping within the letter of the law while deliberately breaking its spirit.) Thus the police often have covertly to make "political" decisions precisely in the name of political neutrality. Of course, in addition to the Public Order Act (which governs the banning of demonstrations) there is the Race Relations Act, which makes incitement to racial hatred a crime. But in the present sort of case, this act is virtually useless. For one thing, the incitement has to happen before it can be stopped. Secondly, prosecutions under it have to be authorized by the Attorney General (the legal officer of the government, and thus a political person) and not just by the Director of Public Prosecutions. In other words, if it is thought politically unwise to prosecute for fear that the result might be worse than the offense, then nothing happens. (This is why people like Enoch Powell have never been prosecuted under the Act, whereas lesser fry have.)

The clear conclusion is forced upon one, then, that the application of purely legal remedies is not likely to have much effect in problems of this kind. This is precisely why the National Front so constantly proclaims that all its opponents need to do if offended by their activities, is to prosecute them under the Race Relations Act. Of course, in this domain the law is designed to be more "educative" than "punitive": its object is more to encourage a certain atmosphere than to bring about remedies for all particular offenses. But it is also because (as in the case of obscenity) the judgments involved are subjective. Legal forms of words can never at one and the same time be precise enough to catch the offender and wide-ranging enough to prevent the spirit of the legislation being flouted (as distinct from the mere letter). The only solution, then, is "political." First of all, this means having a public which is politically intelligent enough to see what is happening, and active enough to take part in opposing it. But it also

ROY SCHEELE

A COUNTERPOISE

The garden in July
starts suddenly to lean
this way and that, under green.
The plot's gone all awry.

The dill has grown so tall
it looks us in the eye
like a peacock's tail let fly,
and the impending ball

at the green onion's tip,
as if about to fall
or be toppled after all,
has spun off at the lip

of balance, in the nick
of time, now letting rip
with these little fingertip-
size blossoms. There's a rick

of them, arrayed like stars
around a center, thick
as thieves, awning-striped and quick
with seed. While glinting jars

await the strutting dill,
between the rows, like scars,
the rut fills in as far as
the light can sprawl or spill.

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means having politicians who are united in their opposition to fascism, racism, etc., not just verbally but in terms of political action. (The physical decay of Ladywood is not only a disgrace: it is a potent symbol of the neglect by politicians of what matters most to ordinary people. As such, it is a standing invitation to fascist thuggery.) But neither of these conditions can be counted upon with any certainty at present.

The British public at present tends to blame the government for everything that goes wrong, and to expect it to do everything which is necessary, to put things right. Hence the apathy on which fascism breeds. (The Ladywood turnout was 45 percent of the electorate.) And the politicians have to share the guilt for this, by their tendency to assume that *post hoc propter hoc* is a valid inference: whatever is good is the fruit of good government (thus the party in power), whatever is bad is the fault of bad government (thus the opposition). Perhaps one of the most tedious, but also one of the most pernicious things about British politics today is the way that this boastful, puerile and illiterate fallacy is continuously employed by every politician in sight, to the great insult and detriment of the people as a whole.

BRIAN WICKER

(*Brian Wicker is* Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Great Britain.*)

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FROM ROME

END OF THE CONCORDAT?

"An agreement between Caesar and Peter has finally been reached," Cardinal Pietro Gasparri announced in February 1929. The "agreement," co-signed by Benito Mussolini in the name of Italy and Gasparri himself in the name of the Holy See at the Lateran Palace in Rome, became known as the Lateran Pact. Composed of the Lateran Treaty in which the Italian state recognized the sovereignty of the Vatican and the Concordat which regulated the Church's activities within the Italian state, the pact was, according to its authors, a long-awaited solution to the so-called "Roman question" which dated from the time of Italian unity when the Italian army had put an end to the temporal power of the Popes. Mussolini, boasted the Fascist press, had succeeded where everyone else, beginning with Cavour, had failed.

Despite the noble declarations of reconciliation and concern for religious peace, however, the treaties had clear political dimensions. As a result of the agreement, Mussolini's Fascist government gained enormous international, as well as domestic, prestige. "Mussolini has become the leader of Catholic conservatism," wrote a London newspaper, "able to unite around himself all of moderate Europe." In return the Catholic Church received recognition as the "sole religion of the State," was granted a series of financial and fiscal privileges and was given judicial supremacy in matters of religious marriages (which would be legally binding in the eyes of the State, but could only be dissolved by an ecclesiastical court). The teaching of Catholic doctrine was to be considered fundamental to public education. In short, the Concordat destroyed any idea of Church-State separation.

After the fall of Fascism, the Constituent Assembly —composed of all the anti-Fascist forces—was called upon to decide the future of the Concordat. The Christian Democrats, then leading a coalition government that included the Italian Communists, asked that it be incorporated unaltered into the new Italian Constitution. The lay front—in the majority—adamantly refused. Its leader, Lelio Basso, then general secretary of the Socialist Party, declared: "It is not a question of safeguarding religious peace. No peace can be founded on laws that offend the civil conscience." In a last minute about-face, however, the Italian Communists, led by Palmiro Togliatti, broke away from the lay ranks and swung the vote in favor of inserting the Concordat in Article 7 of the Constitution, claiming that the party did not want a split for religious reasons between the Communist masses and Catholic workers. The vote was taken on March 25, 1947. Two months later—despite Togliatti's sacrifices in the name of Catholic-Communist unity—the Communists were expelled from the government and the Christian Democratic hegemony in Italian politics—which was to last three decades—began.

Now thirty years later—and almost a half a century since the signing of the Concordat—Italy is reexamining the infamous pact. Not all agree, however, on just what is to be done with it. Some believe that it simply should be abrogated, insisting that it is anti-democratic, authoritarian, illiberal and unconstitutional (the recognition of Catholicism as a state religion violates the constitutional principle of religious freedom; an attempt on the life of a Pope is punishable by death although the death penalty was abolished in Italy in 1947). The Radical Party, for example, is leading a campaign for a popular referendum that would call for abrogation. Others—including the Vatican itself—agree that the Concordat is outdated, but maintain that it can be merely revised rather than dropped entirely.

In the latter category are the Italian Communists who after three decades of exile from the "stanza dei

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bottoni" (control room) are at the door of power once again: the present government, composed solely of Christian Democrats, owes its existence to a Communist abstention. The Italian Communist Party has launched a call, however, for a "compromesso storico" (historic compromise), that is an alliance between Italy's transitional forces: the Catholics and the Communists. Is their alliance with the Christian Democrats (who needless to say support revision rather than abrogation) on the Concordat question a political maneuver aimed at bringing about the "compromesso storico"?

"Since Gramsci, the Communists have always had an open hand policy toward the Catholics," Carlo Cardia, professor of canon law at the University of Cagliari, told me in a recent interview. Cardia heads a special commission of the Italian Communist Party to investigate not only the Concordat question, but the whole gamut of Church-State relations. "We do not see ourselves as opposing Catholicism. We have always refused anti-clericalism." According to the Communists, some kind of Concordat is needed in Italy because of the country's particular history and political realities in which the Catholic Church has played a key role. Despite a process of secularization (the electoral successes of the Communist party, the victory of the divorce referendum in which 60 percent of the Italians—67 percent in Rome—supported the divorce law and the new laws concerning education and the family have limited the influence of the Church), the Catholic Church still remains an important force in Italian life.

The Catholic Church is a reality that cannot be ignored, says Cardia. The recent controversy created by the transmission of Dario Fo's *Mistero Buffo* (considered offensive by the Vatican) on national television is an example, he claims, of the type of conservative reaction that can occur if the Church feels isolated. "We do not want to give the Church any instrument that could be used for revindication or for creating a climate of victimization (the State refused to dialogue with us). This would only serve to support the more conservative forces in the Church."

The Concordat greatly reenforced the hierarchy's power over the clergy. Priests, for example, cannot hold any public office or job and cannot be members of political parties. The pact also provided enormous tax breaks for the Church which, according to a recent investigation by the Italian magazine *Europeo*, owns one-fourth of the City of Rome. The revised Concordat, insist the Communists, must be based on principles of liberty. "We are more confident than the other lay parties that there is a large part of the Church that will push for such a change. The Church is no longer a monolithic bloc," claims Cardia, "it has become pluralistic."

Unlike the Communists, however, many Catholic dissenters are less confident that the institutional Church will so readily give up its privileges. "A poor Church does not need to make a pact with the State," affirmed Agostino Zerpinati, a Franciscan, at a recent convention of the Movimento di Comunità Cristiane di Base (Movement of Grass Root Christian Communities) composed of 70,000 people grouped in 300 communities throughout Italy. "But a Church that acts like a capitalist state needs to defend its power." A more openly political Catholic movement, *Cristiani per il Socialismo* (Christians for Socialism), claims that the Concordat is not in the spirit of Vatican II which challenged the Church to renounce "certain legally acquired rights whose use could cast doubts on the sincerity of its witness."

Revision or abrogation? In the 1950s a group calling themselves the *Amici del Mondo* (friends of the liberal review *Il Mondo*) including such prominent intellectuals as Ernesto Rossi, Gaetano Salvemini and Luigi Salvatorelli, called for the abrogation of the Concordat. Not until 1967, however, did the House of Deputies approve a motion concerning the Concordat—and then only to instruct the government to look into possibilities of revision. The Gonella Commission was formed and in June 1970 the first meetings between the Holy See and the Italian State took place. In 1971 the House again approved a motion to promote negotiations between the two parties to "modify the Concordat in order to bring it into harmony with the evolution of time and the development of democratic life."

Last November the Christian Democratic government finally presented a 14-point revision project. The director of *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican newspaper, commenting on the proposal wrote: "Any act or event that could contribute to religious peace is welcome." The Communists called it a "step forward," although they termed it insufficient especially regarding matters of religious education, marriage and the fiscal privileges of the Church. The other lay parties hinted that the proposal was the result of a compromise between the Communists and the Christian Democrats. The House, nevertheless, voted to continue negotiations.

This Spring, however, the Radical Party began collecting the 500,000 signatures needed to bring about a popular referendum calling for the abrogation of the Concordat. Despite Communist (and Christian Democratic) opposition to the referendum, the Radicals now seem to be nearing their goal of bringing the 48-year-old issue before the Italian electorate. Whether the choice is for revision or for abrogation, however, the process will be long—and most likely painful. "We have learned many things from our Catholic culture," Cardia assured me, "among them, a sense of history and, above all, patience."

MARGO HAMMOND

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A NEW SECRETARIAT

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

It could have been a cause for rejoicing. It could have been a cause for alarm. But, in actual fact, the action of the bishops at their May meeting in establishing a secretariat for the laity went almost unremarked. It is almost fifteen years since Daniel Callahan wrote in *The Mind of the Catholic Layman* these hopeful words:

> Much has been written in our day of the "open society"—a society open to the talents of all, the contributions of all, the personalities of all, the beliefs of all. Is this an expression which really holds only for secular, democratic, pluralistic societies? Has it not pertinence to the Church as well? If the Church is a free community of men bound to one Lord and faithful to those who have authority in the Church; if the clergy and the laity are joined together as co-workers respectful of the rights, prerogatives and sensitivities of each other; if the prophetic voice can be heard clearly amidst the voice of authority; if the Church is opened out into the world to serve and redeem the world; the layman has both a sense of participation in the work of the Church and its reality—then the Church is truly an open society of the profoundest kind.

At the time Callahan wrote it was very true, as he said, that the American Catholic layman had gone relatively unrecorded through our history. "To judge from the attention paid him, he might just as well not have existed . . . what he thought about, how (in fact rather than fiction) he got along with the clergy, how his understanding of Catholicism shaped his reaction to non-Catholics, how he interpreted his duties toward Church and society—these things are rarely mentioned."

In the ensuing years since Vatican II, the American Catholic laity has caught the imagination of pollsters and sociologists. No persons in our body politic have been more interviewed, commented upon, and exhaustively studied. And yet a great deal of what Callahan found at the beginning of his study still obtains. "As fast as the Church changes, America changes. As fast as the layman confronts one challenge, another is there to take its place, and no two laymen are alike. What troubles one may be of no consequence to another; what concerns a layman in Boston or Peoria may be different from what concerns him in New Orleans or Los Angeles."

This continuing situation has been worsened by the fact that information about the teachings of the Church, and the pronouncements of popes and bishops, reaches the laity not through what used to be considered the normal channels of communication in diocese and parish, but through the channels of the press and media. Often, long before a lay person hears his bishop's letter read from the pulpit, long before the papal encyclical reaches him—if it reaches him at all—via a parish study club or diocesan publication, he has heard it discussed, analyzed, interpreted by commentators and secular reporters of the religious news. This constitutes a communication problem of the gravest import for a church seeking one voice in applying the teaching of the gospel to the problems of a chaotic world. What should be even more troubling to Pope and bishops is that a great deal of what they know about the problems, concerns and thinking of the laity comes to them only through this indirect and incomplete way. The apparent drawing back of many of the hierarchy from the ventures and initiatives of Vatican II can in part be attributed to the alarm engendered by Catholic defections heralded in our excitable press.

There really was cause for rejoicing in the intent of the American bishops expressed in their Action Item Number 1 in the discussions at the general meeting in November 1976. They "indicated serious concern for developing the role of the laity in the Church. For this they recommended a national level focus on lay concerns, where individual members of the laity as well as lay organizations can be heard and receive a response to their needs." (Report)

There was also cause for alarm, or at least dampened hopes in the December 10th *motu proprio* of that same year. The Vatican's ten-year-old laity council became a permanent Vatican body known as the Pontifical Council for the Laity—headed by a cardinal president and a presidential committee of three cardinals. Although both members and consultors of the council were supposed to be, in the majority, lay people, the chance that they would have real voice seemed slim. Furthermore, the wording of the purpose of the council was much less encouraging than the wording of the Action Item of the American bishops. The council was to foster lay participation in the fields of catechetics, liturgy, the sacraments and education, keeping in mind the roles of other Vatican bodies in these areas. It was to see that the Church's laws regarding the laity are observed and, in addition, should have a special interest in pastoral councils. There is a watchdog quality to this description.

So far—in contrast—the American bishops have laid their stress on the new secretariat as a place where the laity can be heard and find response

(Continued on page 606)

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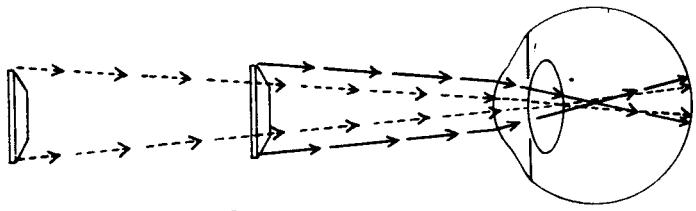
GOD'S EYE VIEW

JAMES A. RALPH



New hope for developing nations

In the midst of all the alarums and excursions caused by such technological developments as enhanced radiation nuclear weapons and recombinant DNA, the more benign inventions of twentieth century technologists elicit little sustained response from the non-scientifically oriented sector of the population. Public interest in last year's Viking-Mars mission had a substantially shorter half-life than that of the Apollo Man-on-the-Moon Project, which itself quickly paled on the Nielson. Nevertheless, the Landsat Earth Observatory Program, an outgrowth of the U. S. Space Agency's efforts with the Earth Resource Technology Satellite (ERTS), has reached a transition point where the previous interest in Landsat capabilities and accomplishments, which was limited to a few scientific specialists and international entrepreneurs, will give way to a much larger audience of politicians, statesmen, and leaders of all three worlds. If bold and farsighted decisions are made by the Carter administration in the next few months, both the President and the Earth's inhabitants should benefit; Carter, from an enhanced posture in world statesmanship; and the burgeoning populace, from a better understanding of the nature of the Earth's finite resources.

What manner of creature is Landsat to cause such a spillover from the bubbling cauldron of space technology into the equally steamy region of international politics?

Orbiting the earth in a north-south direction every 103 minutes at a height of 570 miles, the Landsat solar-powered observatory photographs the area of the world immediately below it. Due to its orbit characteristics, the spacecraft's view moves constantly westward as the earth rotates beneath it. Taking photographs in four regions of the spectrum, the one-ton Landsat surveys the earth almost completely every 18 days, having returned then to its starting point. On board the satellite the photographic images are converted to radio signals and beamed to Earth where they are reconstructed.

The color of the Earth scenes does not resemble in the least that which an astronaut would see from that altitude. Rather, by astute choice of spectral regions, some of which are beyond the range of the human eye, the false color images secured reveal surface features which would be invisible or difficult to detect in true color. For example, in Landsat's eye, healthy crops may stand out in bright red, while diseased vegetation appears gray. In the area of mineral detection, Landsat's false color imagery has led to the correlation of geological fractures and faults in Colorado with major metal mining areas. In Alaska, new discoveries of copper and molybdenum have resulted from use of Landsat data. Other earth resource-oriented disciplines such as the Environment, Water and Marine resources, Land Use, Mapping and Forestry are also benefitting from the current remote sensing capability.

Landsat's capabilities have not escaped the view of the United States Department of Agriculture. The potential agricultural benefits are well summarized in an excerpt from a statement given by Clayton K. Yeutter, former Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Community Programs, USDA, to the U. S. House of Representatives, Committee on Science and Technology.

> Such a system, [Landsat] using remotely sensed data in conjunction with weather, climate, and traditional agricultural information sources could (1) provide a new capability for the United States and other countries in managing agricultural production and inventories to reduce fluctuations in price and volume of trade; (2) provide near real-time indications of crop diseases and insect infestations which could affect world food supplies; (3) provide earlier warning of impending crop shortfalls due to adverse weather; (4) provide improved production estimates to international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization for use in assisting developing countries in making rational marketing decisions.

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Landsat then can evolve into an operational agricultural crop forecasting system of major benefit to the United States and to the world. Properly applied, the knowledge derived from this peripatetic Earth viewer could lead to effective national, and ultimately international, management of the finite food resources available on this planet. Humane use of such a capability can lead to better production and fairer apportionment of the annual yield (and reserves) of foodstuffs. Avaricious use can lead to more precise exploitation of the have-nots.

Economic Hang-up

The reason that the Carter and previous administrations have not stepped out smartly under the Landsat banner is primarily economic. (Landsat I recently celebrated its fifth anniversary in space.)

"The key question is how will such a system be financed by users, and to what extent," according to Eliot R. Cutler, the Office of Management and Budget's associate Director for Natural Resources, Energy, and Science.

To address this user cost question, an ad hoc committee has recently been formed by Frank Press, presidential science advisor and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy. The make-up of committee representation underscores the ubiquitous nature of the anticipated use of Landsat data. The line-up includes the departments of Agriculture, Interior, Defense (Army Corps of Engineers), Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation, as well as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Science Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency. The group will also try to develop a management policy for such a system that is acceptable to Congress and to the Carter Administration.

The management responsibility for Landsat within the U.S. government is variously viewed with some agencies vying for control while others demur. External to the federal government, entrepreneurs are endorsing the concept of a privately owned satellite system similar to COMSAT. Other interests recommend control by an international consortium analogous to INTELSAT which currently manages an international communications satellite network. The United Nations is another suggested alternative.

A catalytic piece of legislation which helped accelerate the consideration of a soon operational Landsat system was introduced earlier this year by Democratic Senator Wendell T. Ford of Kentucky. The bill, which espouses yet another management structure, was cosponsored by New Mexico's Republican Senator Harrison Schmitt, a former astronaut. The intent of the proposed legislation, which would develop and establish both an earth resources and environmental information system, is, according to Senator Ford, the "development of a fully operational system of remote sensing satellites and associated distribution centers in order to provide the much needed continuity of data and information on the earth's limited resources and fragile environment." The bill would give responsibility for the earth satellite portion of the system to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, while the ground data distribution segment would be managed by the U.S. Department of Interior.

"Fully operational" implies a continuity in the quality of performance. Data must continue to be distributed effectively by the earthbound portion of the system and the orbital observatories must function without interruption. Failure of a satellite to maintain either its sensing or transmission capability would call for immediate and costly replacement.

It is clear at this point that whether or not the Landsat system receives the "operational" appelation and is maintained accordingly, with U.S. dollars, the data which we are receiving and will receive from the two Landsats already in orbit (to be joined by a third in 1978) can be put to good use. Its potential for assistance in worldwide crop management of itself justifies the establishment of policy by the United States which recognizes the national and international benefits that can accrue from remote sensing systems in space. The policy should also contain the promise of generosity—a generosity in the distribution, analysis, and interpretation of the imagery secured from Landsat's high vantage point. The developing nations of the world, particularly in Africa and South and Central America can use the interpreted data to much immediate advantage. Some have already demonstrated a willingness to participate. Research teams from 50 countries and international organizations are currently studying and applying Landsat data.

The National Research Council's Committee on Remote Sensing for Development recently recommended that the U.S. "engage itself in a sustained, long term and systematic effort over the next decade to transfer to interested developing countries the capability to utilize the technology of remote sensing from space." The committee further recommended that an international management structure be devised for ultimate control of the inherently global remote sensing system.

A formal recognition of the benefits of U.S. technology by the Congress and the administration, including a commitment to operate and maintain the system for the initial years would be commendable. Further, the establishment of a program to distribute earth resource information to those developing countries not yet having the capability for remotely sensed data analysis, and to train their people in the use of the data as well, would be a clear signal to the rest of the world that America is willing to share its technological largesse with the remainder of the world.

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an exchange of views (contd.)

'On the Ordination of Women'

Berkeley, Calif.

To the Editors: I understand that your decision to publish an article does not mean you agree with it, but it must mean at least that you judge the article to be responsibly and carefully written and worth reading and thinking about. Your readers' ability to take *Commonweal* seriously presupposes this judgment that the articles you publish deserve a serious reading. When you publish articles on important issues facing the Church today, issues which require reflection and decision, the standards you use should be especially high, reflecting your best judgment about the quality of discourse needed in the Church. I see no reason why these standards should be set aside for an article by a "well known" author.

For these reasons, I was dismayed to find in your recent issue [July 8] an article by Michael Novak entitled "On the Ordination of Women." Mr. Novak describes himself as a Catholic "of liberal mind and conservative temperament," and his writing in recent years seems to indicate that his mind is fighting a losing battle with his temperament. Though he was once able to write with conviction about the pure desire to know, his recent writing has been largely devoted to rehabilitating prejudice and explaining, as it were, what was right all along about thinking in stereotypes. This would be alarming enough, but the fact that he always makes his appeals in the name of the orthodox Catholic Christian tradition requires some critical attention.

In this article, for instance, he is suggesting that some unnamed people either are or are in danger of being "both heterodox and lacking in integral humanism"! This used to be considered a serious accusation (back in the days when words meant something). "Those who argue in terms of 'equality of power,' " we are told, "prove their position not to be Christian. . . ." Is it your judgment that these charges deserve a serious reading?

The article purports to be an exercise in discernment: answering the question, "Is 'the ordination of women' a Christian, or a worldly demand?" In "a small quiet space in the surrounding din" what he calls for is "a deepening of argument."

This deepening begins with three groundless assumptions. The first is that the growing conviction among many Catholics, men and women, that women should be eligible for ordination to the presbyterate is adequately understood as "the movement." The second is that this "movement" involves only certain women thought of as a dissident minority group. The third is that the *argument* for the ordination of women "rests, in particular, upon one's interpretation of the moral and humane health" of this "movement." Since no one is named and no literature cited, it is hard to know which argument Novak is "deepening." In any case, the argument for the ordination of women requires more from us than our impressions of its advocates. It requires us to think.

Novak singles out three aspects of what he calls "the women's movement" that deserve "special theological inquiry." These take the form of questions: "(1) In what way is its anthropology not gnostic? (2) In what way is it not antinomian? (3) In what way is it not morally fixated upon questions of power?" A reader might, at this point, have a glimmer of what deepening the argument is going to mean and begin to wonder "in what way" Mr. Novak has stopped beating his wife. But if these are topics for "special" theological inquiry, let us consider them one at a time.

Now to answer the first question it would be helpful to know what is meant by "gnosticism." Mr. Novak obviously uses the word to mean (Humpty-Dumpty style) whatever he chooses to mean by it. There is some precedent for this use of the word in the Fathers, but the large and growing literature on gnosticism should, by now, give reasonable people pause before they make sweeping statements about it, at least in print. It seems a little premature to say what, if anything, *the* "fundamental drive" of gnosticism is. I see no reason to believe that if it has one such drive it is adequately expressed as one "to deny sexual differentiation." Its drive to deny, as he says, "the ordinary, obvious demands of human flesh" it has in common with many other religious and moral systems, including of course Pauline Christianity. Paul also favored a "spiritualized" view of human nature, and even (in *Galatians* 3:28) a "sexually undifferentiated view": "All baptized in Christ, you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus." This theme was important not only in the gnostic schools but also within orthodox tradition. Three years ago, Wayne A. Meeks published a fine article on the subject in *History of Religions* (13, 3). I would agree that it is "limpidly" clear that women are not men and men not women. I would not agree that the question is "how much" to make of this differentiation but "what" to make of it! Our answer to this question ought not be based on the ordinary, obvious demands of human flesh alone, but also on the light that comes from Christ.

It is equally difficult to know what Novak means by "antinomianism." There is contempt "spewed" on laws and structures, forms and boundaries, even in the gospels. You'll no doubt recall examples from the ministries of

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Jesus and Paul. It is not only the spirit of antinomianism but the spirit of the gospel which drives people to think and hope about "all of history" and "the whole pattern of institutions." Novak criticizes his imaginary movement for having a "primary energy" which is "not aimed at new modesty, new limits, new boundaries, but at the removal of the old." But can we believe that the primary energy of Christ aims at new boundaries? In reading the gospels and epistles, is it the call for new limits that strike us? In trying to discern the difference between "worldly" and "Christian" demands, is it really possible that the Christian demand is the "more modest," the cozier nothing-much-needs-changing one? Mr. Novak does not, in fact, mention Christ in his article, but relies instead on his own version of Catholic folk wisdom, a sort of tune in his blood. This particular tune we have all heard before. In fact most of the serious arguments that have been in favor of the ordination of women have been made explicitly on moral grounds, i.e. on the ability to distinguish right from wrong, justice from injustice, and fidelity from betrayal. This is not, then, "antinomianism."

The third question of being "fixated upon questions of power" is probably the most important. It would, of course, be comforting to think that only "worldly" spirits had to be "concerned with power," and that we good Christians could wash our hands of the matter. Niebuhr and many others have explained why this would be comforting, and why it is always an illusion. The use of power, in the Church as well as in the world, must be of concern to all of us: the *de facto* use of power, its institutionalizations, and its rationales. The questions that have been raised in regard to the ordination of women should be the concern of all members of the Church. Mr. Novak's ear is sharp for voices demanding "equal power," but deaf to all those voices intent on maintaining power. The former voices are, of course, the unchristian ones. You'll no doubt be able to think of many other contexts in which this argument could be useful.

Novak is a good example of the tendency in American journalism to view all issues that arise for thought either as political tactics or publicity gimmicks.

Novak then goes on to give us a sample of his own special theological inquiry on the subject of ordination itself. You can see how he pictures it when he says that very few are "rushing into holy orders" these days, and even those "in holy orders are often left wondering what, precisely, it is that has been added to their lives by these orders." I would contend that these people are asking themselves the wrong question. "Do such orders identify one more closely with the poor," he asks, "or make one more effective in tending to the sick, or enhance one's pedagogical skills in the classroom, or make one a better counselor?" In other words, do they work like *magic?* The answer is: No, they do not work like *magic?* And on this, whether Novak recalls it or not, there has been, in fact, much recent writing.

Most contemporary theologians do, certainly, "favor" that understanding of the Catholic priesthood that emphasizes "his role as 'servant' of the people." This is based on their understanding of the New Testament. This does not mean, as Novak claims, that ordination "qua ordination" is now "virtually without meaning." It means only that its meaning has yet to occur to Novak.

His theological understanding of ministry in the Protestant traditions is summed up in his remark about "low church" Episcopalianism "veering" toward "a conception of orders in which the priest is," as he says, "little more than a minister." (And the sole judgments to be made about *them* are "pragmatic.") His theological understanding of the Catholic position is summarized in this way: "a jump in sacramental efficacy, conferred by God in a mystical and unnatural way." You see how *deep* the argument is getting.

He then goes on to claim that a "sharp distinction is preserved" in the Catholic tradition between "the sacramental efficacy of holy orders" and what he calls "the merely juridical power of administration." (Does this "merely" add a note of "gnosticism" to his viewpoint?) This distinction enables him to say: "In practice, only the pool of persons in holy orders has been drawn upon for administrative positions." But this is absurd. What does he think the word "orders" refers to? The Catholic understanding of ecclesial office has not in fact suffered from this "sharp distinction," as though the self-administration of the Church could be conceived on the basis of purely secular models and carried on by people without theological education, pastoral experience, or ecclesial acceptance and "ordaining." The "priests" meanwhile would presumably be free to distribute packets of sacramental efficacy. (Is there something "gnostic" about this view of sacrament?)

The only "serious question," of course, is about this one particular "rank" of holy orders, not all the other ranks to which, presumably, women one day might legitimately aspire (there are fewer of these than he thinks). Conferring this rank on women, as he puts it, "would mark a profound breach of every tradition." Not even the women closest to Jesus and the apostles, he tells us, had *this* rank conferred on them. As if "this rank" could possibly have occurred to them! I suppose Novak realizes that Jesus did not ordain any "priests." Does he realize that whatever ordaining Jesus did do did not include any Gentiles?

This is for Novak "a basic watershed." If I understand correctly what he means by a basic watershed, I agree. Either one might argue that the systematic exclusion of women from ecclesial office was "culturally conditioned" and conclude that its perpetuation serves the spirit of the world rather than that of the gospel. Or one might argue with Novak that "something fundamental and unalterable is at stake" which can be "felt" but which cannot be expressed in con-

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vincing and intelligent discourse. It's just something one *feels,* influenced, no doubt, by tactical structures and practices. These urgent inarticulate feelings have prompted Novak, in the past, to defend a certain amount of racism in Boston, and to argue that homosexuals should not enjoy the equal protection of law. This kind of thinking he characterizes as "incarnational." This is not what it deserves to be called.

Those who believe that women should be eligible for presbyteral office are told that their "difficulty" is that "they seem to be asserting their own moral superiority over those who have preceded them." One could make this accusation about Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, Francis of Assisi, or the second Vatican Council. I suppose those who favored the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century were also in danger of "asserting their own moral superiority." Such temptations are common enough at all times. But even if all of them had succumbed to such temptations, would the force of their argument against slavery be nullified?

We should lay to rest the fear that there is some "movement" in American Catholicism to deny the reality of the flesh, or claiming that men and women are indistinguishable. The question is: Why should only men be eligible for presbyteral office? The answer Novak seems to give is that it is "a bulwark against gnosticism." You see how that clears the matter up. It is a bulwark, by the way, that did not keep the gnostics themselves from gnosticism, so we may well hesitate to trust it here. Novak claims to speak on behalf of all those "who tend to emphasize the incarnational structure of Christianity" and tells us that all these people "tend to believe that the singular ordination of males" is what he calls "a typical and critical lesson in how to find transcendence within the bonds and the limits of the flesh." Could this lesson be learned equally well through the "singular" ordination of women, or Italians, or redheads? What Novak seems to be finding in the bonds and limits of the flesh is not transcendence but the past conceived of as an object. The critical lesson in how to find transcendence within the limits of the flesh is in the example of Christ, and in that painful, crisis-provoking and "spiritualized" view that we are not merely the slaves of our own prejudices, habits, and deep feelings, and of the ordinary, obvious demands of human flesh.

To top off the irony, Novak reminds us that Christianity "typically" makes high what was low, and low what was high; it "operates by standards opposite to worldly standards." So in a world dominated by men, administered by men, governed by men, Christianity proves itself to be "a sign of contradiction" by institutionalizing, defending, and ideologizing male-dominance. This is one paradox too many. It reminds me of the paradox revealed by one Vatican official a few years ago who explained that: yes, "ministry" means "service" but that the bishops "serve" by "ruling." It is an example of religious paradox running the wrong way. Christian life is supposed to be a sign of contradiction, but not a contradiction of the gospel. Even blowing kisses to that lovable old abstraction, "Rome," does not insure that one's theological understanding reflects the living "orthodox" faith of the Catholic Church. Some evidence will be required for this.

The enormous amount of careful scholarship in Biblical studies, historical theology, and pastoral theology, that has been done on this subject in recent years, and the pastoral and ecumenical importance of this question, deserves more intelligent treatment in your pages. We can only wish Mr Novak, "Godspeed," in his search for "new modesty" and "new limits."

(REV.) ROBERT J. EGAN, S.J.
Graduate Theological Union

Michael Novak's Reply

Father Egan might have addressed me as a potential convert to his cause (my articles show that I am on the brink), and offered me good reasons for following him rather than Rome. But it is obvious that I am under his skin for a whole series of reasons that go far beyond my inquiries on ordination. Let me play back to him a little of his own tone of contempt. His name is Egan and he is embarrassed by the "racists" of South Boston. He is a celibate, agitated about homosexuality. He has sworn special obedience to Rome, but is embarrassed by Rome's position on the ordination of women. He is a very serious theologian (he can remember how to cite an article by Warren Winks from several years ago, even in a Letter to the Editor), agitated by journalists. On all these things, I have cut across his bow. I humbly apologize.

One learns early in life not to argue logic with a Jesuit. But "blowing kisses to Rome," indeed! Daniel Callahan once remarked that, since anti-Catholicism is the anti-semitism of the intellectuals, those Catholics who appear to be "liberal" are accorded favor in the press, as if for helping to bring the Church into positions acceptable, say, to the editors of the *New York Times.* Among many enlightened Catholics, indeed, hostility toward their own people, toward Rome, and toward their tradition has come to represent an early warning about their own center of gravity. It is one thing to love the Church, another to endure her in cold hostility. It is one thing to wish to see her develop historically, unfolding truthfully and in fidelity to her past; it is another to loathe her past as a structure of injustice. A number of our best leaders have left the Church. It would be naive to assume that all critics of the Church will still be within it a decade hence. Criticism must itself be criticized, for liberal views are not always correct.

Some preliminary matters. In discussing racism in Boston and the political rights of homosexuals, and in some other matters, I have tried to show that liberals are as capable of stereotypes as are conservatives. In truth, facing

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unexpected complexities, a new sort of realism is being born in the heart of liberalism. In time, Father Egan will no doubt learn the hang of it.

On the central matter at hand, Father Egan gives the entire game away in the following sentence, which deserves to be italicized: *"Most of the serious arguments in favor of the ordination of women have been made explicitly on moral grounds, i.e., on the ability to distinguish right from wrong, justice from injustice, and fidelity from betrayal."* But ordination to the priesthood is no matter of moral right nor of justice. And, as to what constitutes fidelity, that is the question about which both of us—and all the Catholic people—wrestle in the dark. Indeed, so far as tradition and authority bind our fidelity, the argument at present is tipped to Rome's side. Solid argument and evidence of the Spirit moving in our daily lives may one day overcome that tilt. Following the pure desire to know, which Father Egan also praises, I will then happily agree that on this matter he led and I followed.

Next, the weight of scholarly opinion in any given generation is certainly instructive, but a firm sense of historical orthodoxy also warns that it must always be taken with a grain of salt. Not by dialectics are God's people saved. One generation's scholarly certitudes often become the objects of scorn to a later generation. "The enormous amount of careful scholarship in Biblical studies, historical theology, and pastoral theology, that has been done . . . in recent years," as Father Egan describes it (may I claim to have added a few modest grains to the mountains of its annual harvests?), will be lucky if it is not in the future regarded as a sterile new scholasticism. Such vast appeals, in any case, have a triumphalist ring. It seemed to me in 1964 that the Spirit moved rather among the "liberals" than among the "conservatives." Now that the former have gained virtual total ascendance, the Spirit, it is possible, has deserted them. In any case, given but a short life, one must do one's best to decide which way to turn amid conflicting currents. Will Father Egan forgive me if I confess that I do not yet hear the Spirit in his words, as he does not in mine?

As to specifics, Father Egan's scholarship is far vaster and deeper than mine, and so if he believes that "equality of power" is the Christian mission, he must be right. I had rather thought that Christ's language of humility and service (to mention no other) accepted the differential powers of daily life, as between authorities and subjects, sick and well, old and young, etc. Perhaps Father Egan is merely being coy in suggesting that "heterodox" and "lacking in integral humanism" are today serious accusations. (Could they be used by Rome today except against conservatives?) His letter goes on to show just how I am lacking in both orthodoxy and integral humanism.

Concerning specifics, Father Egan actually knows well which "movement" I mean. He also knows that all women are not in it, nor does it speak for all; and that the argument for women's ordination grows up inextricably linked with the ideologies, anthropologies, and politics of that movement. In ordaining women, the people of God would be learning from "the spirit of the age," not (at first) from biblical scholars or theologians. (Ask Mary Daly how much leadership theologians gave her.) Theologians are here, plainly, followers and they have many rewards to reap for going along, much abuse to take for raising questions.

Happily, Father Egan concedes that my way of using the word "gnostic" has "some precedent . . . in the Fathers"; he also concedes that attitudes toward the body have an "important" role in gnostic traditions; and that the basic question is not "how much" but "what" to make of sexual differentiation. The same Church that taught me Galatians 3:28 also taught me that the male symbolized Christ (and the female the Church) in an important way not lightly to be dismissed; and that only male priests could represent Christ at the eucharist.

And, yes, in reading the gospels and epistles, in the context of the historical people of God, it is "the call for new limits," and not antinomianism, that strikes me. The commandments of Jesus are not antinomian. I have never held that "nothing much needs changing" in Church, state, or even in me. Specifically, I would be pleased to change my mind on the question of the ordination of women. It is true that I have rather more trust in "Catholic folk wisdom, a sort of tune in my blood," nourished for centuries by drinking the blood of Christ and trying to be faithful to his word. Both living and praying come before articulation and theologizing, and I look to the former as sources of judgment upon the latter (and to the latter as judges upon the former). To put the question on sharply moral grounds, as Faher Egan does, to go to the "moral" while disdaining "the tune in one's blood," may not be antinomian; but in its disdain for flesh and experience it is one of the manifestations of the gnostic spirit. One of the things I learned from Scripture, indeed, is that the "wisdom literature" grew out of the experience of the people; and that thinking "from the bowels" is a strength of Hebraic, as distinct from Greek, thought.

Father Egan is historically incorrect to think me deaf to "all those voices [in the Church] intent on maintaining power." A decade of my life was spent criticizing those voices of power and I do not fear them now. And if the decade now beginning is to find me criticizing persons of power like Father Egan—his press is better than the Pope's—it is because he must be one of the few people remaining on earth who do not see how weak Rome has become, and how theologians now stand outside of all check-and-balance in the public press. Since the arena of present argument between us is the liberal press, Father Egan may forgive me for thinking his side has at present the greater worldly power. To take his position would automatically make me a hero in important quarters, among many who read and applaud. I have been cheered, and I have been hissed; cheering is nicer.

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Holy orders, it was my point to show, *do* work "like magic." The recent writing dismissing the cultic role of the priest and exalting the merely ministerial role seems to me to constitute a temporary overreaction; the balance wlil come back in time. Over and above one's skills and talents, orders do carry special graces through the hands and actions of priests, in a way distinct from those that affect the rest of us. Gladly do I receive a priest's blessing. The priest *is* a cultic figure. A priest is a minister of service as well as a cultic figure, but one dimension of his service, raising it above all others, is its cultic base. He represents Christ in a way those of us who are not priests do not. He is holy in a special way, set aside, not in the way saints are holy (although, let us hope, in that way, too), but as a special sign set in our midst by God. A priest is a gift to the community. Special reverence is rightly paid to the grace operating through him. More than the bare New Testament reveals—and it says much about the cultic priestliness of Christ—the traditions of the Catholic people rightly see special cultic power in the priest, a power sufficient on occasion to move us to tears. Father Egan need not be coy; he knows exactly how the Catholic traditions on this point have differed from those of the evangelical churches. Eerie, strange, a form of voodoo—so have many Protestant campus ministers explained to me their observations about the peculiar position of the Catholic priest among the Catholic people. Naturally, a fully modernized priest wouldn't want all that *fascinans et tremendum*. Father Egan, not I, can write about "packets of sacramental efficacy." Nonetheless, I would kneel for his blessing.

Like Rabbi Gordis [Sept. 2], Father Egan makes a good point against me on my argument about the "moral superiority" of the present. My reply to Gordis should also suffice for him. "Why should only men be eligible for presbyteral office?" Egan asks. (I prefer the word "priestly.") Part of the symbolic power of the Christian message depends on its emanating from males rather than from females, is one answer. Christ in entering this world came as a male rather than as female; he chose for "the twelve" males and not females, and gave them functions and powers he did not give to women, although neighboring traditions of priestesses, and the patent virtues of his women followers might easily have so inclined him. So also, for continuing symbolic reasons, the male is the more scandalizing and telling symbol of Christianity. The male is not the better, deeper, or truer Christian, but he is, alas, the more surprising witness. When the "oppressed" preach humility, the message is not as clear.

I recognize that the crux of this argument depends upon a particular anthropology, and on a particular reading of sexual symbols in many cultures. It also depends upon how one reads the spirit of our age. Father Egan holds that the systematic exclusion of women serves the spirit of the world rather than that of the gospels. Such exclusion occurs in the events of the gospels, so it is hard to see how it violates the gospels. For nineteen hundred and seventy years, it was not felt to violate the gospels. Still, perhaps he is right. Perhaps there is something new to be noted.

There are many new things under our sun. When women priests arise and say: "Be ye meek and humble, and serve others"; "Be as the little children . . ."; "The meek shall inherit the earth . . . "; "Turn the other cheek . . ." and other central themes of Christianity, it will certainly be a sign of contradiction to the women's movement. Without that movement, the question of the ordination of women might not have arisen in our era. And perhaps that will be the happy ending, women preaching to the women's movement and to the rest of us the ancient Christian language of service.

Like the others, Father Egan offers nothing for a doubter to lay hold of. Surely, there are better arguments for ordaining women. I could construct some myself. And have.

MICHAEL NOVAK

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A TALE OF MIDNIGHT

PRESS

Perhaps some learned spelunker of the mind will fit all the pieces together—the hatred of dogs, the love of uniforms, the obsession with Satan, the blankets darkening the seventh-floor window which overlooked the Hudson River, the strange names he chose for himself—"the chubby behemoth," "John Wheaties," "the Wicked King Wicker," "Son of Sam." The clues have a suggestive, almost surreal quality—Son of Sam, Son of Darkness, blanket-darked room. In one of his letters Sam included a strange sketch: two crossed lines forming an "," with a cross above and an "S" below and the male and female sexual symbols to either side. Glanced at quickly the symbols "read"—QSO, the astronomer's shorthand for quasars, mysterious light and energy sources in the deepest reaches of space. Perhaps some learned Freudian or Jungian or neo-Reichian attached to Kings County (Brooklyn) Hospital will figure out how it all fits together, but I wouldn't bet on it.

According to the New York Police Department, a 24-year-old postal clerk named David R. Berkowitz is the Son of Sam. Their evidence includes the short-barreled, .44 caliber revolver which Sam used to kill six and wound seven people in eight separate attacks since July 29, 1976; a collection of Sam press clippings in Berkowitz's apartment; a fingerprint on Sam's letter to Jimmy Breslin in June; and Berkowitz's admission that he shot all those people because Satan, or a 6,000-year-old "Sam," or a "sign" told him to. Technically Berkowitz is a "suspect" innocent until proven guilty, but the law is one thing, life another. We are not truly precipitate if we conclude the cops got him, nor simplistic for taking at face-value the medical opinion of a NYPD detective who said, "The guy is completely wacko." If the case of Sam is not exactly closed, all that remains is to fill in the details.

But the role of the press in Sam's story is something else again. At the moment the press seems to be showing the classic symptoms of a morning after, questioning the intemperate words and headlines of the long night before. Small wonder. It was quite a whirl while it lasted, quite a carnival. The first big headlines came in March, when Mayor Beame and Police Commissioner Michael J. Codd called a press conference to announce a nut was on the loose with a .44 caliber revoler. In April a note was found pinned to a car seat between the bodies of Sam's fourth and fifth victims. After that the sky was the limit.

It would be hard to say which was *the* Sam story. The pickings are too rich. High among possible candidates would be the following:

—July 5. New York *Daily News*. "Breslin to .44 killer: GIVE UP! IT'S ONLY WAY OUT."

—July 28. *Daily News*. "To the .44 Caliber Killer on his 1st Deathday," a reference to the anniversary of Sam's first killing.

—August 4. *New York Post*. "MOBSTERS JOIN HUNT," a typically flat *Post* headline, but the story below wins the Thin Air Award.

—Same date, same paper. A front page "open letter" to Sam from the *Post*'s Australian reporter Steven Dunleavy, who concluded: "Help us to help you to help the city to once again sleep in peace." Dunleavy was the third reporter to solicit Sam's surrender, following Jimmy Breslin (who actually received a letter from Sam in June) and Pete Hamill.

—August 1. *Post*. "NO ONE IS SAFE FROM THE SON OF SAM." The rationale behind the blazing headline was the fact that Sam's victims of the previous night had been shot in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn, far from the sites of his previous attacks.

—August 11. *Post*. Screaming red headline the day of Berkowitz's arrest: "CAUGHT!" Circulation for the day was up 400,000, to 1 million. (The *Daily News*' circulation was up 350,000, the *Times*' 50,000.)

And so on. There hadn't been anything like it in years, and a lot of people hoped there would never be anything like it again. In its Talk of the Town column *The New Yorker* accused the press of irresponsibly making a bad situation worse, and after the arrest *Newsweek* and the *Times* also raised some of the inevitable questions:

Had the press surrendered to sensationalism? Had the sensation contributed to Sam's pyschosis, whatever that might prove to be? Was Berkowitz's right to a fair trial prejudiced by news stories which stated flatly that he was Sam? (In one particularly egregious example the *Post* published some of Berkowitz's letters to an old girlfriend under the headlines, "HOW I BECAME A MASS KILLER. By David Berkowitz.") Had press publicity of the whole episode prejudiced all potential jurors in New York?

Most of the critical comment was directed at the *News* and the *Post* for waging an old-fashioned tabloid circulation war, hyping the genuine stories and piping the rest. The classic gambit on a dead news day is a rehash under some such headlines as COPS HUNT KILLER,

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CITY IN FEAR, WHERE WILL SAM STRIKE NEXT? etc. etc. The *Times* was more circumspect (August 12, "BERKOWITZ CHARGED IN 'SAM' CASE, ORDERED HELD FOR MENTAL TESTS") but did not stint its coverage (two full pages the day after Berkowizt's arrest) of what was, when all is said and done, just one more psycho killer loose in a city with 1,500 murders a year. If the *Times* was punctilious in the proprieties, liberally sprinkling its stories with "alleged" and "according to police," it nevertheless joined the tabloids in treating the story as a *story*.

The question of what makes a story is the knottiest in journalism. A story becomes a *story* when the press elects, in a competitive process just this side of collusion, to treat it as a story. A possible analogy would be the manner in which certain celebrities become famous for being famous. Sam killed six people, but it was the press, not his murders, which made him an object of general fear. In New York, after all, there is plenty to watch out for. Five people were struck by lightning in the city in July alone, for example, and only the traffic department knows how many jaywalkers died during the period of Sam's rampage because they neglected to cross at the green. As a threat to the lives of New Yorkers Sam would have to be ranked pretty far down the list, but as an object of fear he was formidable indeed. He might have fired his pistol night and day without making so much as a blip in the mortality statistics, but with the help of the press he loomed as large in the minds of his fellow citizens as the Grim Reaper himself.

It was a circus alright. The unrestrained spirit of the thing was nicely captured by some of those who tried to cash in, like the lawyer who allegedly offered to sell tapes of his conversations with Berkowitz to the *News*; a Berkowitz neighbor who wanted $15,000 for an interview, and an old Berkowitz girlfriend who sold some of his letters to the *News* and the *Post*. Sam's story was the first fruit, some charged, of Rupert Murdoch's attempt to bring the tasteless, boisterous, thoroughly lively excess of British popular journalism to the United States. But the criticism strikes me as being at times niggling in spirit, and at worst wrong-headed and unfair. For one thing, the police actively sought the cooperation of the press in an attempt to smoke Sam out, and it is arguable that without the unprecedented publicity Berkowitz's neighbors in Yonkers would never have put two and two together and concluded he was something more than a nut with a grudge against dogs. It took them long enough as it was.

Besides, Sam carried out five of his eight attacks, during which he refined his shooting style, before there had been any publicity at all. Whatever the nature of his obsession, it did not seem to depend on the interest of strangers. His mental world was as hermetic as a telephone booth.

Criticizing the tabloids for their all-out pursuit of Sam is a bit like criticizing the lion for gorging upon the lamb. It neglects the nature of the beast. The press made Sam notorious because it couldn't help itself, but it did not make him sensational. Sam did that all by himself. He was the one who drew attention to his quasi-religious dementia (a disturbing subject which deserves more attention than it has so far received), and his chosen means of self-expression—the murder of young women and their boyfriends by moonlight—hardly invited indifference, once its pattern had been determined. Sam captured proved to be so chaotically loony he failed to sustain interest. He did not appear to be the victim of a fascinating malfunction—a short-circuit, say, between sex and Satan—but of the mental equivalent of a train wreck. Where do you begin with a mess like that?

But Sam on the loose, writing weird letters to columnists, sneaking about the outer boroughs with a pistol, shooting young women who all seemed to be Catholics with long hair . . .! Sam's story was a tale for midnight, of the sort children tell each other, first cousin to stories about ghosts, flying saucers, sea monsters, three-toed man-eating bears, or anything else mysterious, elusive and threatening. Cancer is scary without being interesting; Sam scary and fascinating. Giving the press a story with so much mystery and violence is like offering an

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alcoholic a job tending bar. You're inviting a binge, and it's niggling to cite the reprobate's every intemperate word the morning after.

From one angle Sam's story was strictly a matter of taste. You liked it or you didn't depending. But a lot of criticism I've seen had the appearance of plain dislike masquerading as disapproval. There was a high-minded, even priggish note to some of it, as if fascination with Sam were somehow coarse and frivolous, like a taste for *Kojak*, Harold Robbins, the cuisine of McDonald's. The high-minded critics seemed to argue that newspapers are supposed to be sober and informative, not titillating. Furthermore, tabloid sensationalism is dangerous, encouraging Sam to kill more. So they said. But what they really seemed to dislike was the rawness of the story itself, the appetite for awful detail piled on detail, the shameless posturing of columnists, the sense the tabloids gave of relishing the scariness of it all, having the time of their lives.

Well . . . there was something gaudy and crude about the whole Sam hoorah; and there is no question the rights of any less-loony, more trial-likely defendant might have been seriously prejudiced; and the awful possibility exists that someone with a slightly different psychosis—a nutty desire to be notorious, say—has now been meticulously tutored in how to proceed. I supose I've got to register at least a mild, formal protest on all three points, but my heart's not in it. They seem to be peripheral faults to me, peculiar to the case.

Sam's story had a certain zip, but no staying power. The only thing I still remember with any clarity is a photo of Berkowitz, on the front page of the *Times* the morning after the arrest. His eyes are large and liquid; his mouth slightly open, delicate in shape, almost feminine. There is no fear nor alarm in his expression; no amusement; no defiance; only a mild interest in what comes next. This fellow is in another world. If he is a monster, he's a monster of indifference.

Perhaps some psychiatrist will pinpoint the blown fuse, but I doubt it. Sam's elusiveness ought to generate a sense of mystery, but it doesn't. The type is too familiar. His story is like all the others—"a loner," "kept to himself," "soft-spoken," "just an average sort of guy." We've seen Sam's face before, although no one seemed to mention it. If you strip away all the carnival hoopla which surrounded Sam's last three months at large, he was just another nut with a gun.

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TRAVELING MAN

THE SCREEN

Werner Herzog is given to pilgrimages. He goes off to remote corners of the world to make his films—Peru, the Cameroons, Wisconsin—and the films are often about people traversing a landscape. Although Herzog says that film matters more to him than life, a claim he has backed up by risking his life to make films, the films themselves give the impression of being the mere by-product of a vision, like poems written down by automatic dictation. They make it obvious that life matters more, not art. The making of a film is sometimes, I suspect, the pretext for a pilgrimage, as when Herzog stopped in the middle of editing one film to rush off to Guadeloupe and do another. Perhaps having the new film to make assuaged his feeling of helplessness before his own impulse to go see an old man reportedly living alone in the path of the volcano Soufriere. But Herzog is equally capable of undertaking such obsessed journeys without the worldly justification of filmmaking.

When he heard his sponsor and long-time friend Lotte Eisner was dying in Paris, for example, he immediately set off on foot, walking all the way from Germany to Paris on back roads. His purpose, he says, was to prevent her from dying, not by getting there to see her—he could have done that better by plane—but simply by the self-assertion and self-sacrifice of the walking. (She survived.) In other words, it really was a pilgrimage, an act of faith, a mythical, mystical gesture rather than an attempt to get anywhere in *this* world. Perhaps the most wonderful pilgrimage Herzog ever made, though, was the one to Albania when he was fifteen. Again, the impulse was a pilgrim's, not an explorer's, for Herzog knew he couldn't get into Albania once he arrived. That was the very reason he went. That there should be a forbidden country right in Europe is what fascinated him; and once he got there, unable to enter, he hiked through Yugoslavia and Greece all around Albania's borders as close as he could get, peering into this land of mystery.

In the journey to Albania there is a strange mixture of comprehensiveness and incomprehensibility that is found in Herzog's films as well. It is almost as if Herzog, faced with the impossibility of knowing this country, felt for just that reason that he must somehow at least embrace or surround it. In his films his approach to life seems very much the same. Consider *Fata Morgana*, Herzog's 1971 documentary on the southern Sahara. One wonders whether Herzog didn't feel that he could confront life all the better by coming here, to a desert where life just barely hangs on at all. (At one point an African boy holds up to the camera a pet fox or dog,

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and later a German zoologist holds up a lizard the same way while explaining how incredibly tenuous, and singular, the existence of all creatures is in so desolate a region.) Yet because Herzog's subject was really all of life, not just the desert, he wanted his record of the desert to gesture beyond itself, to include whatever is not part of living in the desert as well as whatever is.

In order to accomplish this, Herzog wrested from his desert imagery the opposing symbolism of water. The first shot we see of the desert has a mirage effect so that the sand seems to lead to the shore of a lake which occupies half the screen in the distance. Besides being repeated several times, this shot is interwoven with other watery apparitions—a tortoise swimming in what at first appears to be an ice pool, children standing on a plain that really is covered with the few inches of water that are only an illusion in the mirage, etc. The film ends, moreover, with a solarized dissolve from aerial photography of marshlands (perhaps along the edge of Lake Chad) to aerial photography of parched desert flats. We cannot tell where the one landscape ends and the other begins, or even, at first, that there are two. By making the place where they meet mysterious and unobservable like this, the film both creates a kind of visual unity and at the same time forces us to stand outside of it. At best we can only encompass it, just as Herzog once encompassed the unknown land of Albania.

Other Herzog films give us the same feeling that he is hiking the world over in search of images for the world itself—in search of settings and situations that will allow him to present all of life in microcosm. In *Even Dwarfs Started Small* (1970), set in a barren landscape not unlike the desert, there is an institution for dwarfs where the inmates are staging a rebellion. It is as if Herzog had cast dwarfs in the film's roles so that he could scale down all life, and make the institution, in proportion to the tiny people who inhabit it, represent the entire world. Like these dwarfs, Herzog's filmmaking starts small—a very low budget, a minimal crew, non-professional actors, etc.—but comes to stand for something larger than usual instead of smaller. His latest film, *Stroszek,* circumscribes two civilizations the way *Fata Morgana* circumscribes desert and ocean. When its hero is persecuted at home in Germany, he comes to this country to escape, and thus he gives Herzog the opportunity to envision both Europe and America at once, to see them as a single, continuous culture.

Although *Fata Morgana* was not Herzog's first film, it seems to stand in his work as a kind of *spiritus mundi,* a repository of much of the imagery that appears in the other films. In *Dwarfs,* for instance, a procession of the rebels at the institution is photographed to the accompaniment of a kind of tribal music, and in *Fata Morgana* as a real tribal procession passes in a similar shot, the same music occurs. In a zany scene in *Fata Morgana* workers at a modern trailer camp in the desert clown before the camera, waving as if they were trying to guide it somewhere, and the scene in *Stroszek* where the immigrant from Germany has his new mobile home delivered has much the same feel to it.

A lot of that sense of comprehensiveness and incomprehensibility we get from Herzog's work is concentrated in *Fata Morgana.* It is a bag of myths on which he can draw. Divided into three sections—"The Creation," "The Paradises" and "The Golden Age"—it is Herzog's attempt to write his own Book of Genesis. Because it aims at accounting for all creation, like the Bible it cannot be too explicit. Its power comes from the quality of parable about it. It is imponderable, even mystical in a way, because it attempts to see life whole while at the same time respecting its mysteriousness. When I first saw *Fata Morgana* some years ago, having seen no other Herzog work, I took it for a documentary and thought it a pretentious, silly film. But perhaps that was because holy men are at first often mistaken for fools. An attempt at mystification rather than explanation, it is really the opposite of a documentary. Now that I've seen other Herzog films, I realize how large, central and important a film this one is.

(The first of two parts)

COLIN L. WESTERBECK,JR.

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A MORAL, NOT AN ECONOMIC OPTION

DAVID O'BRIEN

The American Journey: A Theology for the Americas Working Paper

JOE HOLLAND

IDOC/North America and the Center of Concern, $2.50

Theology in the Americas was a year-long process of discussion of liberation theology around the United States which climaxed in a major conference in Detroit in August, 1975. The process of applying the insights of liberation theology, and its theological method, to the United States continues now in a group of task forces exploring the theological dimension of experiences of oppression and injustice in contemporary North American society. Joe Holland, a member of the staff of the Center of Concern, a Jesuit sponsored think tank on issues of justice and peace, has been an active participant in this program. In this "working paper" he offers an initial effort at a Marxist analysis of American society and culture, hoping to assist others to carry on their active theologizing with a clear comprehension of the concrete conditions in which the project takes place. The method of liberation theology requires such a contextualization, critical reflection on the setting of theology, in order to allow theology to take account both of its own culturally conditioned character and to make its application of Gospel values more specific, concrete, and realistic.

In three sweeping chapters Holland outlines his views of the founding, growth, and current predicament of the United States. His historical analysis relies heavily on the work of such revisionist historians as William Appleman Williams, while his analysis of the contemporary scene combines a well established new left view of the domestic crisis with some distinctive insights into the relationship between domestic problems and the broader problems of the international economic order. Like any series of generalizations about American history, many of Holland's statements are open to considerable question. The economic interpretation of major events in American history offered by Williams and his more sophisticated predecessor Charles Beard, has always broken down when confronted with facts. Not economic but political oppression, and that more potential than real, explains the unrest which led to the Revolution; and that oppression can only be understood as such when account is taken of the ideas which informed the minds and hearts of colonial Americans. Something similar could be said of the conflict between slavery and freedom which led to the Civil War. Holland is sufficiently aware of these problems to regularly mention problems of culture, but these are always within the Marxist superstructure, reflecting more basic realities of political economy. Forces of production and the structures they develop are the "really real"; ideas and values, it seems, must always seem less real, less reliable, less important.

This problem becomes clearer in Holland's assessment of the current "crisis." The American journey, in his view, has come to a major crossroads, and his interpretation of that crossroads shapes both his understanding of the past and his prescriptions for the future. Drawing upon Williams, Holland argues that the ideology and reality of economic expansion, first across the continent, then into the world economic arena, provided the nation's dominant elites with the means whereby they could maintain control over American society. Expansion provided a growing pie of goods and services which could mean a higher standard of living without any real re-distribution of income, wealth or power. These economic benefits, the hope for more, and the national glory which the policy implied, could calm the anxieties of the middle class and coopt the workers away from the oppression of the present to the mobility promised for the future. Holland, like many others, believes that the age of expansion is over. Faced with that fact, and the end of growth it requires, the elites confront a real dilemma. Hopes awakened among minorities and women will not be fulfilled, the dynamics of corporate profit will demand further exportation of jobs, leading to unemployment and a decreasing share of national wealth for workers, while the revolt of the third world and the new competition within the first world threaten the security of the major institutions of American capitalism itself. Unable to reform as in the past by a promise of growth and a broader share in the surpluses growth creates, American capitalism must develop more obviously forceful mechanisms of control over its own people. To counter the repressive and exploitative policies to which the dominant classes are driven, Holland calls for solidarity among minorities, women, workers and much of the middle class: all have a common enemy in the structures of corporate capitalism; all should work to develop a common vision of a socialist future and a strategy for its realization.

In the 1890s and again in the 1930s Americans of all political persuasions held to a similar view of the national predicament. In both periods business counterparts of todays "trilateral commission" and radical counterparts of Joe Holland agreed that the age of expansion had ended and America must move either to a more direct imperialism, with militarism and control at home, or to a real reordering of na-

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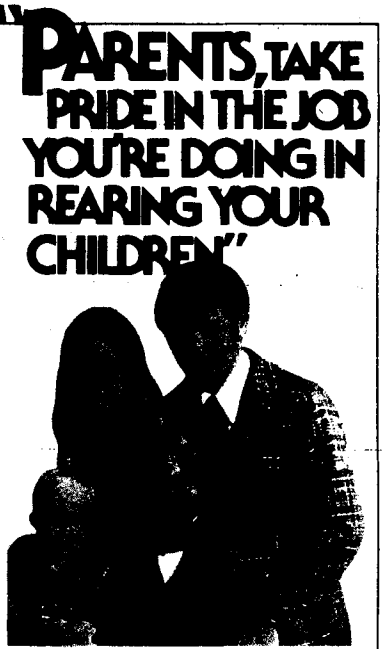
tional priorities and a real redistribution of power and wealth at home. Social Gospel theologian Walter Rauschenbusch outlined such a view of "the social crisis" early in the century; after visiting President Theodore Roosevelt he decided that the choice was not so bleak after all. In the thirties Henry Wallace wrote a book called *America Must Choose*; after outlining the options in a fashion not altogether different from Holland's, he ended by arguing for the half-way choice of the New Deal. Given the choice again between a militarist and imperialist future and a socialist transformation at home, one suspects that Americans might once again prefer to try to muddle through.

The point is a simple one. The American left has always needed something more than an adequate historical interpretation and a convincing political/economic analysis. Americans refused to grasp the justice pole because they sensed, quite rightly, that it would cost them their liberty. They refused to grasp the libertarian pole because they knew, also quite correctly, that it would cost them their equality and a higher degree of injustice that even they, a relatively tough minded people, were prepared to tolerate. Cynics at both ends of the spectrum played to their self-interest. Holland's elites hoped to keep people under control by providing enough rewards to buy them off. His friends on the left hoped that enough people would remain, or become, really poor to cause loss of faith in the promises and rebellion against the system. Class analysts were always looking for a class to carry the socialist dream, a group whose self-interest would lead it to advocate class revolution. Each successive class failed to live up to its obligations and allowed itself to be bought off by the promise of immediate gains. Even now, Holland bases some of his hopes on the traditional Marxist notion of increasing misery. Growth had led to American "exceptionalism"; we have been different because of the frontier, but now, with the end of growth, there will be increasing misery, spreading first through the workers, whose jobs are going and whose unions must be brought under control, then into the middle class, beset by debt and easy prey for repressive leadership.

Then, when everyone is in deep trouble, presumably socialists can come forward to lead the masses, oddly with the same promise of a materially better life which long was carried most credibly by their capitalist opponents. Here, today, the argument becomes a bit confused, for, while the self-interest of the miserable will supposedly be the wellspring of rebellion, the promises cannot be as explicitly materialist for fear of the environment, nor can they be simply nationalization for fear of bureaucracy. Government ownership and redistribution of income made sense when one presumed that capitalism had solved the problem of production; they are less convincing when production itself seems to be the enemy. Thus the socialist promise is even less convincing than in the past; a miserable people might be forgiven if they decide the odds are better with the trilateral commission.

For my part, I prefer a theme less apparent but very real in Holland's writings and the theology in the Americas group. This position would argue that socialism is first of all a moral, not an economic, option: it should be chosen because it is right. Then it should be made clear that the transition to socialism will be hard not easy. It will require a more moderate standard of living, an almost isolationist retreat from the international economic arena, a radical de-escalation of military production and, most important of all, an intelligent, dedicated, self-critical politicization of our lives. If, as those of us who argue for socialism keep saying, it can be democratic, then there is simply no substitute for politics, for the hard, difficult work of articulating long-run visions and short-run options, trying to market those through persuasion, and trying to bring them into existence through the mechanics of political democracy, either through a revived socialist party



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or, as Michael Harrington advocates, through an active and honest socialist presence within the Democratic party.

Finally, the people who should be addressed are not the poor, who are quite right to seek immediate gains for themselves and their families that socialism in fact cannot at the moment provide, but the middle class. Christian social action began by saying that the poor could not be evangelized because their concerns were with survival; only when they were secure with a moderate standard of living could they consider the religious question. That argument was always self-righteous and never empirically validated, but, even granting it, the fatal flaw was that no one ever got around to raising the religious question after their bellies were full. Instead, each generation goes to the poor to tell them how bad the system is and where their real interests lie. Perhaps it is about time church activists and social democrats direct their analysis, their theology and their challenge to the middle and upper classes, telling them to stop pushing people around at home and killing them abroad and start finding ways to use the education, talent and treasure which they have received from America to build a human world and fulfill those promises which America once offered and in fact are still alive in the hearts of most of her people. In this framework, Marxist analysis will be a useful tool to understanding the American political economy, but it will not become a trap which enshrines social process at the expense of human will and trivializes human struggle by confining it to those whose oppression is too real and too awful to be simply the locus for someone else's dream of authenticity.

REVIEWERS

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Mahatma Gandhi and His Apostles

VED MEHTA

Viking, $14.95

MICHAEL ZEIK

I have now read three biographies of Gandhi. That sounds fairly impressive until you hear that something over 400 of them have been written. Many more, I should imagine, than have been written about Roosevelt, Churchill, or even Hitler (although, today, devils seem to fascinate us more than saints).

Why 400 biographies? Gandhi was not endowed with any exceptional scholarly, scientific, or artistic talents. Aside from passing his bar examination in England (not an arduous achievement at the time), he never earned any academic degrees—nor did he ever win an election or hold public office. That is correct. He may have held the sub-continent of India in his pocket (do dhotis have pockets?), but he never held public office. Yet, when this man died, a black arm-band, like a mournful equator, encircled the globe. Gandhi was immediately compared to Socrates, to Buddha, to St. Francis, and to Jesus Christ. What explains it?

It was certainly not his questionable behavior to his wife; the Mahatma was still in his thirties when, without consulting her, he publicly announced his vow of brahmacarya (celibacy).

Nor was it his uneasy relationship with his sons, who tried in vain to live up to their father's exalted ideals. Fearful lest they exploit the fame and power conveyed by the Gandhi name, he denied them even a formal education—maintaining that the life of a peaceful peasant was morally superior to that of the moneyed classes. (His eldest son ended by breaking completely with him, and became everything his father disapproved of: a meat-eater, an alcoholic, a gambler, and a philanderer.)

Ved Mehta, devoted though he is to the Father of India, does not hesitate to set down these and other facts relating to Gandhi's neurotic obsessions with diet, sexuality, and excretion. In his seventies, for example, the Mahatma took to sleeping (naked) with his female attendants. When questioned, the old man explained that brahmacarya must be tested, or it would lose its edge. (And "sleeping" was not a euphemism for the night's activities.) But both the Western psychologist, Erikson, and Gandhi's own disciple, Bose, concluded that these eccentricities were the result of his repressed sexuality.

Unfashionable as it may be to say this, Gandhi was probably in need of a "Church"—and by that I mean a sacred community with which he could 'check-in' for corroboration or confrontation. Gandhi had placed himself beyond Hindu orthodoxy; he was, in *fact*, beyond it. Nevertheless, the Greek word for "private" is "idiotes." . . . There is a problem here.

Yet no one, friend or enemy, ever accused the man of conscious hypocrisy. After his vow, he made it his custom to confess publicly any sexual temptation he experienced. That, he found, ended it. The simplicity of life, the outright poverty he demanded from his wife and children, he first cheerfully imposed on himself. Even his apparent obsession with excretion—it is not hard to make jokes about this homely, old man—was more than neurosis.

Caste Hindus refused to clean their own waste; this was the hereditary task of the Untouchables (who must have deserved such unenviable karma from their behavior in a previous existence). Gandhi realized, as some of his smart-mouthed critics have not, that unless he could change age-old attitudes regarding human excrement, there would be little hope for the social rehabilitation of the Untouchables. So he talked a lot about latrines, and frequently carried a shovel. Vulgar? How would Christ have judged it?

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His economic views are similarly dismissed today as hopelessly medieval. He championed the spinning wheel against the textile factory; David against Goliath. His views are quite extreme, and I will not defend them as they stand. Nevertheless, we have lived to see a book like Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* seriously discussed on campuses all over America. Between the bullock and the Buick, there is still the bicycle. Attention to village agriculture and handicraft do not seem to have plunged China back into famine and misery.

Paul Johnson, in a recent, excellent review of this book in the *New York Times*, felt that Gandhi, in the long run, had been a failure. There are grounds for the opinion. Gandhi shared it. I don't. It is probably true that the 100 million Untouchables are worse off now than they were when Gandhi died. But we in America know that, even if there is an agonizing time-lag between the two, the first is not negligible; it has, indeed, a long-range bearing on the second.

This wizened, homely old man, at once the Washington and Lincoln, the Founder and the Emancipator, of modern India, won independence for 600 million people without resort to war. For this alone, Toynbee singled him out as the most important personage of the 20th Century—far outranking a mere Roosevelt or Churchill. He was the first to demonstrate the achievement of political ends without military means—*in a nuclear age!*

Einstein, not the least of his admirers, said this: "Gandhi demonstrated that a powerful human following can be assembled not only through . . . the usual political maneuvers and trickeries, but through the cogent example of a morally superior life." Even in our own day we see the opponents of the present regime in India appealing from Gandhi (Indira) to Gandhi (Mahatma). Would it not be of consequence if the Third World were to elect his, rather than Lenin's, formula for freedom?

I am thus led to accept Ved Mehta's own complex portrayal of the guru-statesman (Indian by birth, Western by education and training, Ved Mehta can neither live with him, nor without him.) That a man is neurotic, that he rationalizes some of his more obscure emotional needs, does not automatically strip him of his dignity—even his sanctity. Of this I am sure: if it did, there would be many open dates on the Christian calendar-of-saints as well.

Paul Johnson may be right: perhaps Gandhi's life proves that "goodness is not enough." It merely remains indispensable.

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Beehive Press, $30

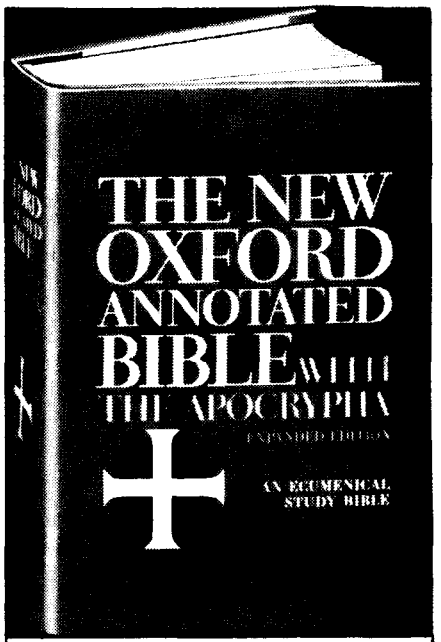
The Old in New Atlanta

ELIZABETH M. SAWYER &
JANE FOSTER MATTHEWS

Jems Publications, $5

WAYNE ANDREWS

Ada Louise Huxtable must have been aware of this for some time, but there is no harm in pointing out that serving as the *New York Times'* chief architectural critic isn't the easiest job in the world. She must decide what's what in the world we live in. This grave responsibility she bears with good humor and even gaiety, realizing that she may repent tomorrow of the judgments she hands down today. "How temporal are the standards of critics!" she cries out as she discovers the merits of the New York Public Library, and there really isn't a solemn paragraph in this collection of her recent columns. Flying into Houston



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one day and Atlanta the next, she does her best to keep up with what is going on without losing her temper.

She may not have tantrums, but she has her pet peeves, one of whom is Minoru Yamasaki, the "vacuous vulgarities" of whose Woodrow Wilson School of Public Affairs at Princeton leaves her appalled. Nor is she kinder to the World Trade Center that Yamasaki designed in collaboration with Emery Roth & Sons. "Consummately uninspiring" is her comment. Another architect who disappoints here is Edward Durrell Stone. When she comes to his Kennedy Center in Washington, she reports that "the building is a national tragedy. It is a cross between a concrete candy box and a marble sarcophagus in which the art of architecture lies buried."

Your reviewer finds himself agreeing so often with Mrs. Huxtable that he is *almost* ready to make the fatal mistake in print of trying to improve her mind. Why, oh why, must she say that Walter Gropius's house in Lincoln, Massachusetts is "that clarion call to the future"? How could she forget that Gropius was one of the perpetrators of the Pan-Am Building or that the Architects' Collaborative that he organized is responsible for the ghastly new home in Washington of the American Institute of Architects. "Its insistent, dominating horizontal bands of precast concrete," she admits, "destroy rather than preserve scale."

Rightly or wrongly, Mrs. Huxtable concludes that "the level of architectural design has risen significantly across the country." But this does not prevent her from heaving a sigh for the good old days when McKim, Mead & White and Carrère & Hastings ruled the architectural world. She knows that Warren & Wetmore's Grand Central Terminal was a "grand civic gesture," and when discussing one of the plans to dismember Stanford White's Villard houses whose Gold Room she describes as "unequivocably magnificent," can't keep from calling the scheme a "particularly slick bit of real estate sleight-of-hand." And she is aware that there were plenty of prigs in the modern movement. "What the architectural modernists attempted to do," she tells us, "was to bring history to a halt. Not only was the past rejected out of hand, but the present was to have nothing to do with it."

If only Mr. G. E. Kidder Smith had pondered those lines of Mrs. Huxtable before he went to work on *Architecture in America!* Mrs. Huxtable is traveling her own road, but, so we are told in the introduction, Mr. Kidder Smith has been led down a road he never intended to travel. In his own words he is not an architectural historian. The book he wanted to publish would have been entitled *New Architecture USA*, and who knows, we might have been as grateful for that as we were for his *Brazil Builds* back in 1943. Alas! he was taken in hand by the Graham Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, who persuaded him to spend eight years traveling through the fifty states photographing not only the present but the past. The past, to put it politely, is not his dish. This is a haphazard collection of plates, missing all too often the tried and true, and offering next to no novelties. "I am not a professional photographer," he declares, and this seems to be true as one contemplates one shot after another taken, as he admits, "on the run."

Gloom seems to have settled down on Mr. Kidder Smith when he got deep into this project. "I have been asked," he tells us, "how I established a procedure for tracking down so many buildings spread over so many miles. The first necessity was to devise a cross-indexed field sheet with space for the name of each building, its address, the architect and date when known, followed by a series of pertinent points to be checked and written upon location. These sheets would then be filled in with the requisite information and filed by state in outsized manila envelopes."

This might have been deleted by Marshall B. Davidson of *American Heritage* who, with his cohorts, is responsible for the text. And the text itself, might have been edited by someone with a sense of humor. Do we need to be told, when the South is under consideration, that "frock-coated planters and hoop-skirted belles entertained in stately splendor at their elegant plantation houses"? Or that "midwestern cities are far from either ocean, landlocked in the center of the continent"? Page after page is studded with irrelevant dates, popping out like so many raisins in a bowl of clam broth. Incidentally, Mr. Davidson to the contrary, it is not quite true that John Hawks's drawings for Governor Tryon's palace at New Bern were "almost unbelievably found in London." A set has been on file for generations in the manuscript collection of the New York Historical Society.

Mr. Kidder Smith is a devoted modernist, no doubt of that. But it is sad that he has no patience with the *history* of modern architecture. Thanks to the labors of Vincent Scully, Jr. and other scholars, almost everyone knows by now that the early work of Frank Lloyd Wright would have been unthinkable without the achievements in the Shingle Style of McKim, Mead & White and their rivals. In fact, Wright's own house of 1889 in Oak Park was patently inspired by McKim's Low house at Bristol, Rhode Island, of two years before. But Messrs. McKim, Mead & White are obviously suspicious characters, to be condemned without a hearing because of their later "period" houses. McKim's University Club, so dear to Mrs. Huxtable's heart, is not represented. Neither are the Villard houses. For some strange reason there is not one example of Stanford White in the book.

Since the perfect photograph of any building remains to be taken, it would be silly to describe as perfect the performance of Van Jones Martin, who took so many of the shots in *The Architecture of Georgia*. But Mr. Martin comes dangerously close to perfection and may take his place by the side of Ezra Stoller and the late Richard Nickel. As for the text, it is a model of scholarship. Your reviewer must admit he would have enjoyed a quote from either Julien Green or the

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Civil War correspondent William Howard Russell on the Gothic Green house in Savannah, but that is quibbling, for we are told for the very first time that the architect of the Green house was John S. Norris of New York. The source of this information is politely acknowledged in a footnote.

If there is such a thing as the permanent book on the architecture of Georgia prior to the Civil War, here it is. And although it is lavishly illustrated and beautifully laid out, it should never be described as a coffee table item.

The Architecture of Georgia is bound to get all the attention it deserves. *The Old in New Atlanta* may be overlooked, which is a pity, for it is one of the best local studies that your reviewer has come across. If you are interested in what Atlanta looked like before John Calvin Portman produced the Hyatt Regency Hotel, here is the answer to all of your questions.

The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America

RONALD C. WHITE, JR. & C. HOWARD HOWPKINS

With an Essay by John C. Bennett

Temple Univ. Press, $15, $6.95 (paper)

P. DAVID FINKS

Ten years ago, many Americans, Protestants and Catholics, blacks and whites, clergy and lay, were caught up in a surprising amount of ecumenical social action. We banded together to battle through a series of crisis situations: Black civil rights, marauding urban renewal bulldozers, the organization of strife-torn urban communities.

Some at the time saw this era of "practical ecumenism" as the beginning of a fuller Christian unity, perhaps the long-delayed second stage of the Reformation. A leading church activist of this period told me recently that he saw the interdenominational social mission effort of the '60s as a sign of new life for the church in the modern world. "It was," he said, "like we were going to bring in a new day in Christendom kind of thing."

There were many in those crisis-ridden days who had similar high hopes for the church's ministry. It was, whatever else, a creative and exciting time to be working in the church. But as the decade came to a close, the bitterness of the anti-war movement caught up in the repressive climate of the Nixon administration, together with the animosity of militant Black Power groups turned the national attention away from domestic social reform. The churches heeded their critics and returned, almost overnight, to more spiritual concerns.

The Social Gospel by White and Hopkins is a look back at the roots of the social concern of the Protestant churches in the United States, a concern that had its most flowering in the ecumenical urban ministry programs of the '60s. The book may well serve as a tonic for those activists who miss that style of church social concern in the '70s. But the book is, above all, an excellent introduction to the social gospel movement that flourished in American Protestantism in the late decades of the 19th century and in the first years of the present century. The history of this movement is presented by the authors through an interweaving of documents from unpublished or out of print sources, critical essays by present-day scholars, all tied together by a brief narrative. The format presents a few problems in keeping track of time sequence as you read it, but all in all, it gives a good overview of a complex movement.

Co-author Hopkins published an earlier study of the social gospel thirty-five years ago, (*The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915*). The authors intend the present volume to "restate and revision the social gospel for a new generation of readers." They point out the connections between the church social involvement of recent years and the efforts of social activists and theologians at the turn of the century.

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The narrative builds around the answers to four questions, stated in the book's introduction: 1) Is the social gospel chiefly a response to external events, or is it rather the expression of the internal continuity of aggressive American religion? 2) How did the social gospelers understand the new urban world? 3) To what extent is the social gospel a theological movement, and what is its theology? 4) What were the points of connection and tension (if any) between the social gospel movement and the larger progressive movement?

Other questions arise and are answered in the course of the book. The final chapter is a fine essay by theologian John C. Bennett summarizing the influence of the social gospel in the contemporary scene.

For Catholics, I think, the book opens up an era of social action in American church history in which we were little involved. The Catholic Church was busy for the most part until after 1920 with the care of its newly-arrived immigrant members, to say nothing of its battle against "Know Nothing" hostility in American society. There is evidence in the present volume that some of the early social gospelers included "Romanism" among the critical urban problems of their day.

As far as I am concerned, however, the book is worth the purchase price for readers who have never met Walter Rauschenbusch. Baptist minister, seminary professor, social activist, he is, as the authors note, "the foremost theologian of the social gospel movement." As a young pastor in the 1880's, Rauschenbusch worked in the Hell's Kitchen section of New York City. In that slum neighborhood he tried running a parish for people who, in his words, were "out of work, out of clothes, out of shoes, and out of hope." In such hopeless conditions, we are told, his German Evangelical inheritance of "warm hearted piety broke down. . . ."

During those years the young pastor came into contact with important social reformers. In New York he met Edward Bellamy, and Henry George, the author of the controversial *Progress and Poverty*. Rauschenbusch spent a sabbatical leave in Germany reading Marx and Tolstoy and talking to the leading social thinkers and theologians of Europe. Later, he published a small newspaper, *For the Right*, dedicated to the "interests of the working people of New York City."

In 1892, Rauschenbusch and a few friends formed a study group and named it the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. For twenty years the Brotherhood met regularly to discuss the problems of the world in the light of the Christian teaching of the Kingdom of God—"in order to re-establish," they said, "this idea in the thought of the church, and to assist in its practical realization in the world."

Many years later a young minister gave me a copy of Rauschenbusch's book, *Christianity and Crisis*, at a time when I found myself discouraged to the point of inactivity by the problems and needs of people living in a parish in a central-city ghetto. It was an important day for me when I first read his updated version of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Rauschenbusch wrote: "The good Samaritan did not go after the robbers with a shotgun, but looked after the wounded and helpless man by the wayside. But if hundreds of good Samaritans traveling the same road should find thousands of bruised men groaning to them, they would not be such very good Samaritans if they did not organize a vigilance committee to stop the manufacturing of wounded men. If they did not, presumably the asses who had to lug the wounded to the tavern would have the wisdom to inquire into the causes of their extra work." There have been few insights in my life that have made as profound an effect on my thought and action as Rauschenbusch's exegesis of the Good Samaritan parable.

The Social Gospel could serve as an invitation to present-day theologians and social thinkers to make use of the religious tradition and history of the United States in developing a relevant theology and effective strategies for today's social needs. The book contains brief chapters on the social action tradition in American Catholicism and Judaism. The authors point to the need for historical research into the paralells, connections and contrasts among the three religious-social traditions.

In these days when the churches seem to be resting from the exertions of the '60s, *The Social Gospel* recalls a proud tradition of active social concern readily adaptable to new times and new troubles. For a younger generation who seem to think that Martin Luther King, Jr. learned his social action theology from Gandhi, rather than from his Baptist seminary training, it is a text with some new perspectives. For men and women who think that Christian socialism or theologies of liberation are recent imports, *The Social Gospel* offers surprising information and lessons from the North American experience.

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IN BRIEF

ABORTION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE, *by John Connery, S.J., Loyola University Press (Chicago)* $7.95.

This is a rather curious book, in that its historical survey of Catholic thought on abortion ends somewhere around 1950. Father Connery states that he has "no intention of entering into the current debate." Cicero once said something similar in reference to Cataline.

Connery's research shows that Catholicism's present hard-line position on abortion dates back only to the second half of the nineteenth century. Delayed animation—the infusion of the human soul after a period of development—is by far the oldest and longest tradition in Catholic thought on abortion. The tradition began as early as Tertullian and was still reflected in canonical legislation as late as 1869. Basically, a distinction between a formed and an unformed fetus was made. Some

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theologians allowed direct therapeutic abortions, provided the fetus was still unformed. Connery's research clearly shows that Catholicism can not appeal to a long unbroken tradition when dealing with all the aspects of her present stand on abortion.

Connery's style of doing history and moral theology consists primarily in gathering together dates, names, and places: Who said what when; the why usually being because someone else said it previously. There is very little probing beneath the surface of things. Such probing would have forced Connery to deal with "the current debate"—the very thing that he claims he does not want to do.

Abortion: The Development of the Roman Catholic Perspective cries out for a sequel. I am sure that there will be one. As for the present volume, I suspect that many "liberals" will dismiss it as conservative gibberish and that many "conservatives" will embrace it because its style is ponderous. But for those patient enough to sift through the clutter of the Roman Catholic perspective there is much that will illuminate "the current debate."

GERALD J. MCCARRON

THE TASTER'S GUIDE TO BEER, *by Michael A. Weiner, Macmillan, $14.95, Collier paper, $7.95.*

The best beer I ever had was on a blazing hot afternoon in the early 1950s when the county highway crew I was working on had just put down a new blacktop driveway for a country tavern and we sat under a tree dripping with sweat and the proprietor brought us a cold pitcher. The other best beers have been those that punctuated all-night conversations with friends. When I can can pick my brand I buy Rolling Rock (which rates six mugs on a scale of seven on Weiner's chart) because I like the little green bottles. Or I order Budweiser (five) because when my brother and I were very small our father, trying to instill a family enthusiasm for great horses, took us to see the magnificent Anheuser-Busch Clydesdales when they came to Trenton. It was this kind of horse, he said, that inspired the once popular temperance song called "Those Brewer's Big Horses Won't Run Over Me"; and I could gape with awe at these prancing, clumping steeds and imagine how powerful the song—which I have yet to hear—must be. I won't buy the highly-touted Coors because I don't want my beer money supporting Coors family right-wing causes.

So the taste of beer is a function of other circumstances—the lilt of a song, the adventure of a new friendship, the age of the drinkers, the tenseness of the tennis game, politics, the shape of the mug, the spirit of the school and the remembered smell of a horse—that scientifically have little to do with brewing the beer. Michael Weiner, with his *Taster's Guide,* has made beer drinking an even more delightful pseudo-intellectual exercise than it is already. Here is a 256-page illustrated thirst-for-knowledge quencher on the history, chemistry and geography of brew.

Catholic beer-drinkers will be glad to know that the Irish saints were partial to beer, that St. Bridget is credited with changing water into beer, and that the patron saints of brewing are Luke the Evangelist, Nicholas of Myra, (also known as Santa Claus) and, of all people, Augustine of Hippo. They will be disappointed that Weiner does not confront that long-standing church controversy over which Catholic college—Georgetown, Fordham, Notre Dame, Bonaventure, or Holy Cross—has the best earned beer-drinking reputation.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

BECKETT/BECKETT, *by Vivian Mercier, Oxford University Press, $11.95.*

Early in his book on Beckett, Professor Vivian Mercier remarks: "There is always, I believe, a dialectic at work in the minds of the greatest writers: perhaps their greatness consists precisely in the power to hold two equal and opposite ideas in the mind at once."

Such is the framework for Mercier's consideration of Beckett. And though it is hardly an original approach, once

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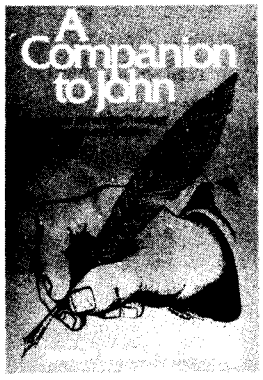

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Mercier gets down to the particulars of discussing Beckett, he is able to provide some fresh perspectives.

His chapter titles present, so to speak, seven ways of looking at a blackbird: the world/Ireland; gentleman / tramp; classicism / absurdism; painting/music; eye/ear; philosopher/artist; and, man/woman. These concepts are all central to Beckett's work, and Mercier's treatment of them is enlightening when it is not bogged down in pedantry. Specially, his assertion that "Beckett's tragicomic figures are down-to-heel gentry rather than *Lumpenproletariat*" is the kind of stuff that good criticism is made of.

One virtue of a good literary critic is to uncover passages in which the writer can speak for himself illustratively. Mercier does this frequently. Here, for example, are some choice words from Beckett's *Proust* (1931), quoted by Mercier, in which Beckett sets out what is perhaps the central theme in all his writing:

> The only fertile research is excavatory, immersive, a contraction of the spirit, a descent. The artist is active, but negatively, shrinking from the nullity of extra-circumferential phenomena, drawn in to the core of the eddy. He cannot practice friendship, because friendship, is the centrifugal force of self-fear, self-negation . . . we are alone. We cannot know and we cannot be known.

Perhaps the best reward to be had from this highly overpriced, slim volume is that one is enticed by Professor Mercier into re-reading Beckett. And therein lies an interesting phenomenon. For the pleasure to be found in coping with Beckett's profound pessimism is perhaps the most puzzling contradiction of all.

PHILLIP CORWIN

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Abigail McCarthy (con't)

to their needs. The first order of businses is to be a national conference or gathering of the laity which will include lay organizations, lay movements and individual lay persons, in the words of Archbishop Edward McCarthy, chairman of The Bishops' Committee. This is meant to be a *listening* conference as much as it is a conference to set up channels of communication.

Everything—it would seem at this point—depends on the choice of executive direction for the secretariat for the laity. In its search the committee on the laity has been remarkably open. The search committee is primarily made up of lay advisors. They are in search of a lay person who is a committed Catholic with lay involvement. It is hoped that he or she will know what it means to be a participating lay person in the Church, especially as envisioned by Vatican II and with a good background in Vatican II theology—not necessarily formally acquired. They are looking for a person with sensitivity to minorities in the Church, sensitivity to problems of the youth and the elderly, and with "extreme sensitivity" to the role of women in the world today. They also hope to find a person sensitive to special contemporary family problems including the problems of divorced and remarried Catholics. They want a person with awareness of the Protestant and non-Christian world, one with ecumenical attitudes and experience. They hope, most of all, to find a woman. Whoever they find will have an almost impossible task—but an unparalleled challenge. *She* (or he) must work for the bishops in what is, after all, a bureaucracy with all that that implies. But she (or he) *may* blend into a chorus the varied voices and arrive at an authentic expression of the mind of the laity. Any applicants?

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 579)

like Brecht? Those who view The Boss and Brecht as interchangeable necessarily come to the conclusion that Grass is judging Brecht and such conclusions miss the point and purpose of the play.

Listening to Günter Grass's advice as to the direction of the play served only to support what I had already felt. *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* is more than a portrait of one man's life—the play explores the revolutionary consciousness of the common man from the legends of ancient Rome to 20th Century Germany. The Boss becomes a modern day Coriolanus with scars of intellectual wars equal to the scars of Coriolanus's physical wars. Grass has weaved a mental web of artfully juxtaposed historical facts, Shakespearean and Brechtian quotations, witty respect for the depth of the worker's needs, and an intimate understanding of the artist's plight. Thinking of the *Plebeians* as a portrait of Bertolt Brecht greatly diminishes its scope and confines its import to that of a topical didactic drama. But the play is more than that—It is a modern day tragedy with classic proportions and should be recognized as such. *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* is not a play about Bertolt Brecht. It is a play about us.

RUIS WOERTENDYKE
Director of the N.Y. Premiere,
The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising

Sexton and God

San Francisco, Cal.

To the Editors: We are in debt to William J. McGill for calling our attention to the remarkably God-directed poetry of Anne Sexton, for the economy of his argument, and for his fine selection of the poet's own words [May 13]. His essay does oversimplify, however, creating a distorted perspective on her late work. This happens in two related ways.

First, the author passes too easily from her published poems to her life, and back again. He assumes that because we can know the testimony and meaning of her deliberately crafted poems, we can know the same for her act of suicide. The latter remains a painful mystery of motive and act, and this would remain largely true even if we possessed more of the proximate biographical data than we do. The poems, however, are public docu-

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ment, indeed performances with the poet as actor. She is very self-conscious of this dramatic truth; her confessional art was felt both as a necessity and a recurrent source of repulsion and guilt. See, for one example among many, "The Play," in *The Awful Rowing Toward God*. In another context she says: "I am, each day,/typing out the God/my typewriter believes in" ("Frenzy," *Rowing*, p. 76); and a few poems later: "*I* am not a saint/but I carol with what the typewriter gives" ("The Saints Come Marching In," p. 80). It is through her art that we have her belief and her "caroling." Their reality is in an important sense fixed. Our reading of it may be colored by an existential act so drastic as suicide, but her meaning and her presence in and through the art cannot be taken back.

This is not quibbling pedantry but rather accounts for the source of the second distortion in McGill's essay. "But the island was empty, just as she had feared." On the contrary, in "The Rowing Endeth" (p. 85), the resolution poem, she finds God and is invited to a game of poker with Him. That this is not sheer irony is shown by the structure and progression of the whole volume, as well as the exuberance of its conclusion. There is no space for explication here, but I heartily recommend to *Commonweal* readers this final poem and the whole climactic sequence preceding it, beginning with "Welcome Morning" (p. 58). Together they constitute a rare instance in contemporary literature of a directly religious poetry of reflection, testimony, and prayer. In the process they do show Anne Sexton's growing realization that God must stoop to humanity, must be immanent and incarnational in the world. They counterbalance the other movement of the *Rowing* volume, the one McGill discerns well, her human yearning and effort to knock on the door of heaven (pp. 2, 53), penetrate the "curtain of God" (p. 19), take off "the wall that separates" (p. 47), ride "the elevator into the sky" (p. 17).

In the descending movement both the action of the Divine Spirit and of Jesus as exemplar are central to her vision. While there are earthly nourishers of the material need—the sea, mothers, especially the Virgin Mother—the human person craves more. The meaning of the curious dramatic monologue, "Jesus, the Actor, Plays the Holy Ghost" seems to be that Jesus is delivered from death and becomes the true Messiah by identifying with the Divine Spirit in the very womb of Mary. The poet herself finds she cannot testify to the presence of God in nature and in men's works without the creative action of Logos ("Not so. Not so." pp 83-84). God must touch these things and her heart; that is the meaning of "You have a thousand prayers/but God has one."

Other manifestations of God are more simply stated. The Sphinx tells her: God is not on earth "but I can tell you where the well of God is" (p. 64). Two poems later she asserts: "And God is filling me" and "all in comes the fury of love" ("The Big Heart," p. 70). Snow is seen as "the sock of God"; as "all bread, rising, yeasty as a cloud"; and as milk ("Today God gives milk/ and I have the pail" p. 77). For this poet, given to depression, God's most special manifestation is joy, exuberance, laughter. Hence, when He laughs in the final poem she laughs too and so does all creation. The final unitive vision is crazily but appropriately expressed, not just for Anne Sexton but for many in our age: "He starts to laugh,/the laughter rolling like a hoop out of His mouth/and into mine,/and such laughter that He doubles right over me/laughing a Rejoice-Chorus at our two triumphs." ("The Rowing Endeth," p. 86).

Finally, by way of corrective, it should be pointed out that, while *The Awful Rowing Toward God* is the last poetic statement given for publication before her death, there has recently been published a posthumous collection, *45 Mercy Street*, 1976. These are poems unrevised, held back by her, but some of them written in the final year. As a whole, they return to the poetry of depressive and difficult times, and the quest for God is not prominent in them.

DAVID L. DERUS
University of San Francisco

Executive Sweets

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: What in the makeup of John Deedy dispels his sense of fair play? [News & Views, Aug. 5, re J. P. Stevens Co.] Why is it wrong for corporate officers to be paid their earned salaries and right for Mr. Kunstler, Miss Fonda, Miss MacLaine, and that ilk to reap outrageous profits while mouthing their sneering do-good superficialities?

Would Mr. Deedy, to redeem his fairness, research and report on the salaries of the radical left (musicians, actors, poets, etc.)? Could he? Since, chances are, such facts are kept under wraps. As a starter, though, he might inquire from the droning Studs Terkel whether royalties from his book *Working* were shared with the respondents about whom the book was written.

And *Commonweal* itself might run the ad of the Right to Work Committee. Now that's fairness. To which your readers are entitled.

MANETTA J. CALKINS

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